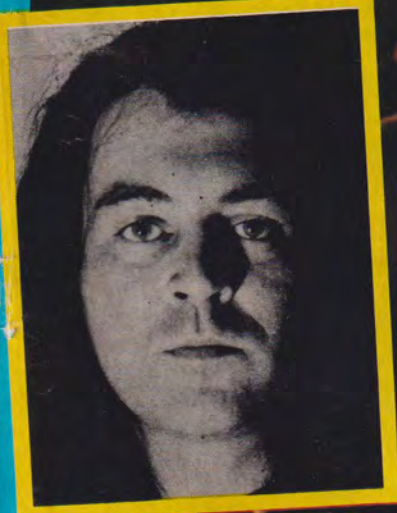


ROCK ON!

**OZZY'S
NEW BLOOD!
EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEWS!**

**MERCYFUL FATE!
MOLLY HATCHET!
CONEY HATCH!
BIG COUNTRY!
LEMMY!
TOTO!
UFO!**



**GILLAN
JOINS
SABBATH!**

JAKE E. LEE: pic by Ross Halfin

DEE SNIDER REVIEWS THE SINGLES!

The official HM charts specially compiled for Kerrang! from a nationwide survey of 50 specialist shops

SINGLES

- 1 1 I AM, I'M ME **Twisted Sister** (Atlantic)
- 2 2 EASY LIVIN' **Fastway** (CBS)
- 3 7 TIME TO ROCK **UFO** (Chrysalis)
- 4 — ROSANNA **Toto** (CBS)
- 5 8 STACK HEEL STRUTT **Wrathchild** (Bullet)
- 6 4 MY ANGEL **Rock Goddess** (A&M)
- 7 16 A WORLD OF FANTASY **Triumph** (RCA)
- 8 3 TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE HEART **Bonnie Tyler** (CBS)
- 9 23 EVEN NOW **Bob Seger & The Silver Bullet Band** (Capitol)
- 10 15 TWILIGHT ZONE **Golden Earring** (Mercury)
- 11 5 SEPARATE WAYS **Journey** (CBS)
- 12 — HEY OPERATOR **Coney Hatch** (Mercury)
- 13 18 MARKET SQUARE HEROES **Marillion** (EMI)
- 14 6 WHY D'YA LIE TO ME **Spider** (RCA)
- 15 — BAT OUT OF HELL (EP) **Meat Loaf** (Epic)
- 16 12 HE KNOWS, YOU KNOW **Marillion** (EMI)
- 17 10 YOUR LAST CHANCE (EP) **Various** (Flicknife)
- 18 — I AM THE FUTURE **Alice Cooper** (Warner Bros)



- 19 — I SURVIVE **Terraplane** (City)
- 20 13 COLD SWEAT **Thin Lizzy** (Vertigo)
- 21 9 FALLING IN LOVE WITH YOU **Gary Moore** (Virgin)
- 22 19 ONE TAKE NO DUBS E.P. **Various** (Neat)
- 23 29 STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART **Bryan Adams** (A&M)
- 24 14 AFRICA **Toto** (CBS)
- 25 24 OVER, UNDER, SIDEWAYS, DOWN **Yardbirds** (Edsel)
- 26 26 SILVER MACHINE **Hawkwind** (United Artists)
- 27 — GETCHA ROCKS OFF **Def Leppard** (Bludgeon)
- 28 20 SHADOWS OF THE NIGHT **Pat Benatar** (Chrysalis)
- 29 11 RED SKIES **Samson** (Polydor)
- 30 17 EVERYBODY WANTS YOU **Billy Squier** (Capitol)

Compiled by MRIB

U.S. ALBUMS

- 1 FRONTIERS, **Journey** (Columbia)
- 2 PYROMANIA, **Def Leppard** (Mercury)
- 3 CUTS LIKE A KNIFE, **Bryan Adams** (A&M)
- 4 KIHNSPIRACY, **The Greg Kihn Band** (Beserkley)
- 5 KILROY WAS HERE, **Styx** (A&M)
- 6 WAR, **U2** (Island)
- 7 NEVER SURRENDER, **Triumph** (RCA)
- 8 SHABOOH, SHOObAH, **Inxs** (Atco)
- 9 PLANET P, **Planet P** (Geffen)
- 10 NERUDA, **Red Rider** (Capitol)
- 11 THE FINAL CUT, **Pink Floyd** (Columbia)
- 12 OUTSIDE/INSIDE, **The Tubes** (Capitol)
- 13 LONG AFTER DARK, **Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers** (Backstreet)
- 14 THE GOLDEN AGE OF WIRELESS, **Thomas Dolby** (Capitol)
- 15 SHUTTERED ROOM, **The Fixx** (MCA)
- 16 RIO, **Duran Duran** (Capitol)
- 17 I WON'T BE HOME TONIGHT, **Tony Carey** (Rocshire)
- 18 THE DISTANCE, **Bob Seger** (Capitol)
- 19 AFTER THE SNOW, **Modern English** (Sire)
- 20 ELIMINATOR, **ZZ Top** (Warner Bros)

The most-played rock albums on American radio stations as compiled by Billboard magazine

ALBUMS

- 1 1 SCRIPT FOR A JESTER'S TEAR **Marillion** (EMI)
- 2 2 POWER AND THE GLORY **Saxon** (Carrere)
- 3 4 THUNDER AND LIGHTNING **Thin Lizzy** (Vertigo)
- 4 14 NO GUTS, NO GLORY **Molly Hatchet** (Epic)
- 5 3 KILROY WAS HERE **Styx** (A&M)
- 6 8 HERE TO STAY **Neal Schon & Jan Hammer** (CBS)



- 7 — TWICE UPON A TIME **Hawkwind** (Flicknife)
- 8 7 FRONTIERS **Journey** (CBS)
- 9 10 DAWN PATROL **Night Ranger** (Epic)
- 10 6 ROCK GODDESS **Rock Goddess** (A&M)
- 11 9 TOTO IV **Toto** (CBS)
- 12 20 IN THE RAW **Rods** (Shrapnel import)
- 13 12 SINK YOUR TEETH INTO THAT **Talas** (Food For Thought)
- 14 18 TANÉ CAIN **Tané Cain** (RCA)
- 15 5 PYROMANIA **Def Leppard** (Vertigo)
- 16 15 NEVER SURRENDER **Triumph** (RCA)
- 17 25 CUTS LIKE A KNIFE **Bryan Adams** (A&M)
- 18 22 LIVE EVIL **Black Sabbath** (Vertigo)
- 19 17 THE SINGLES **Jimi Hendrix** (Polydor)
- 20 32 HEAVY METAL MANIA **Exciter** (Shrapnel import)
- 21 19 MAKING CONTACT **UFO** (Chrysalis)
- 22 — LOOK BEHIND **Journey** (Columbia import)
- 23 16 STRANGE BREW — THE VERY BEST OF CREAM **Cream** (RSO)
- 24 13 WHAT'S WORDS WORTH **Motorhead** (Big Beat)
- 25 23 ROGER THE ENGINEER **Yardbirds** (Edsel)
- 26 21 ARRIVE ALIVE **Pallas** (Cool King)
- 27 28 METAL HEALTH **Quiet riot** (Pasha import)
- 28 11 HEAVY **Various** (K Tel)
- 29 30 POWER IN FUSION **Trance** (Rockport import)
- 30 37 THE DISTANCE **Bob Seger & The Silver bullet Band** (Capitol)
- 31 24 GET NERVOUS **Pat Benatar** (Chrysalis)
- 32 27 CODA **Led Zeppelin** (Swansong)
- 33 29 TIME TO TURN **Eloy** (HM Worldwide)
- 34 26 RACING TIME **Santer** (HM Worldwide)
- 35 33 SELF-DESTRUCTION BLUES **Hanoi Rocks** (Johanna)
- 36 — MICHAEL BOLTON **Michael Bolton** (Columbia import)
- 37 38 HUGHES & THRALL **Hughes Thrall** (Epic)
- 38 34 WORLDS APART **Saga** (Portrait)
- 39 31 RECORDS **Foreigner** (Atlantic)
- 40 36 THREE LOCK BOX **Sammy Hagar** (Geffen)

Compiled by MRIB

IMPORT ALBUMS

- 1 IN THE RAW **Rods** (Shrapnel)
- 2 HEAVY METAL MANIA **Exciter** (Shrapnel)
- 3 LOOK BEHIND **Journey** (Columbia)
- 4 METAL HEALTH **Quiet Riot** (Pasha)
- 5 POWER IN FUSION **Trance** (Rockport)
- 6 MICHAEL BOLTON **Michael Bolton** (Columbia)
- 7 WILD DOGS **Wild Dogs** (Shrapnel)
- 8 SO FIRED UP **Le Roux** (Capitol)
- 9 PLANET P **Planet P** (Geffen)
- 10 DEMON FLIGHT **Demon Flight** (Metal Blade)

Compiled by MRIB

KERRANG!

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NEWCASTLE, City Hall • 20th

HANLEY, Victoria Hall • 21st
BIRMINGHAM, Odeon • 22nd

HAMMERSMITH, Odeon • 23rd







Have they gone AORgggghhh! By Pete Makowski.

"AHOY THERE ye scurvy landlubbers."

With eye patch on his shoulder and a stuffed parrot stapled to the end of his nose, Cap'n Lemmy swaggered out of the main cabin of his sturdy vessel – The Nell Gwynne – brandishing a sawn-off musket and a goblet of Carlsberg Special Brew.

"Cross me palm with silver or mebbe some 10p tokens and I'll play ye me new album – hargh! hargh!" bellowed the man, punctuating his demands with a hearty belch.

Both myself and lens personage 'Bosun' Bodnar tippytoed onto the deck and proceeded to enter the pirate's lair almost shaking with apprehension as to what gruesome fate awaited us. Upon entering we were immediately manacled to some posts and had headphones nailed to our respective craniums.

"Ye'll wish that ye had been made to walk the plank and cut into giblet sized portions after hearing this, hargh! hargh!"

His spine chilling laugh echoed around the cabin, only to be drowned by a sound that went beyond the known realms of white noise. As it got louder the flesh on our faces was pushed tight into our skulls as if we were encountering some musical equivalent of G-Force.

Bodnar's eyes began to spin in their sockets like a fruit machine that had gone haywire, while my teeth rattled violently and crumbled. The last thing I remember prior to passing out was a satanic growl announcing that we were: "back at the Funny Farm!"

As I regained consciousness my bloodshot eyes focussed on a dark looming figure puffing the guts out of a cigarette and taking hearty swigs of his golden brew.

"Alright my son?" Lemmy enquired sarcastically, "whaddya think of the album."

I had to be honest. Lemmy is one of those perceptive sages who can see through a lie or forced compliments like someone looking through a window. This album was certainly different, no doubt

about it. Still essentially Motorhead but, well, very different in some respects.

"It's gonna surprise or disappoint a lot of critics," he chuckled.

"They're gonna have to admit that Motorhead can play. That'll hurt – hargh! hargh!"

Lemmy was right, of course. For among the 11 unfinished mixes were moments of subtlety, technical expertise and (the author suggests you sit down and pour yourself a stiff drink before reading anymore) outbursts of a sheer melody, not forgetting blues passages screaming with feeling. Immediate comparisons bring a growling ZZ Top to mind.

Brian 'Robbo' Robertson has proved himself a prize catch and,

without a doubt, exceeds all expectations on this album. I've always regarded 'Robbo' as an obsessive technocrat when it came to guitar sounds, but he's now proved me wrong by keeping his playing clean 'n' direct, the end result being something akin to a much heavier Billy Gibbons.

The band have also acquired a new producer in the form of ex-AC/DC engineer Tony Platt, who has given them a much more direct, organised sound. But don't panic, headbangers, they haven't gone soft, this aint no disco. In fact whereas former producer Vic Maile sounded as if he couldn't cope with the volume, Platt has retained the guts and increased the noise

while balancing it all out with dynamics.

Like Lemmy, I predict that, as with all HM product, the media will either love or hate this.

Not that it really matters. As far as yours truly is concerned Lemmy is one of HM's last bastions, the final ray of hope.

Right now heavy rock veers between being a hard, erectile predatory beast and a limp, flaccid wimp-out. As time passes, the stranglehold of radio airplay pressures are beginning to squeeze any form of musical innovation to death, encouraging bands to follow a safe-as-milk type policy. Compromise for 45's!

It is slowly but surely becoming apparent that many heavy rock musicians are reaching a transitory stage in their life. Menopause is hitting the Mayhem faction hard, and many established acts are beginning to play their final deck of cards as they either:

PACK UP (Thin Lizzy)

CRACK UP (UFO)

Or just generally Fold Up as any self respecting rockist with an iota of credence wipes his well-banged brow and makes way for the new onslaught of Metal Youth.

But there are the unique few who somehow manage to defy the ravages of nature and avert the ageing process by soaking their molecules in alcohol, not to mention coating themselves in nicotine and speeding up their adrenalin with other nefarious substances.

Which brings us back to the main subject in hand – Lemmy.

An afternoon with this man is enough to wipe away all disillusion and doubt with regards to the validity of HR.

A walking martyr to the cause, a flesh and blood monument to Gonzo OTTism, he's helped make Motorhead a unique force – Britain's largest underground cult phenomenon, defying laws of media gravity which would have had this titanic triumvirate dead and buried a long time ago. But what kind of future does the OTT oracle hold for this new jazzed-up mutation of Motorhead?

As an original Motorheadbanger once declared



Pic George Bodnar

José-Luis Campuzano (Baron Rojo)

SPANISH METAL mongers Baron Rojo have recently been ensconced in London's Battery Studios, working on their third album, 'Metal - Morphosis', which should be released in Spain in early May. Whether the album will be released immediately in the UK is yet to be decided but from a sneak preview I can reveal that the material is very impressive, possibly the heaviest Metal this year and a headbanger's delight. Numbers such as 'Hiroshima', 'You're Always There' and (wait for it), 'Headbanger' should warm the cockles of hard core maniacs everywhere.

HOWARD JOHNSON



GILLAN: WHY I'M JOINING SABBATH

A CLAP of thunder boomed over Soho when Black Sabbath called a press conference to announce the arrival in the ranks of a new singer — Ian Gillan.

The thunderstorm typified the dark clouds of mystery which tend to hang over Sabbatarian activities, but this time most of the reporters marching into the Le Beat Route Club in Greek Street already knew that Gillan was the man set to replace American malcontent Ronnie James Dio.

It was 'new era' time in the history of the band, and in marched Ian, clutching a plate of sausage rolls, Tony Iommi looking magnificent in his huge black moustache and flashing eyes, and Geezer Butler, pondering the significance of it all. There was no sign of Bill Ward — but yes he is back in the band following the great purge of the Americans, Ronnie and drummer Vinnie Appice.

The trio sat looking rather uncomfortable at the tables and microphone, while management, record company and press agents prayed that the assembled press would tear themselves away from the halves of lager and chicken legs and actually ask a few intelligent questions. "Ask them if Villa have been promoted," suggested one wag. "How's your voice, Ian?" called another.

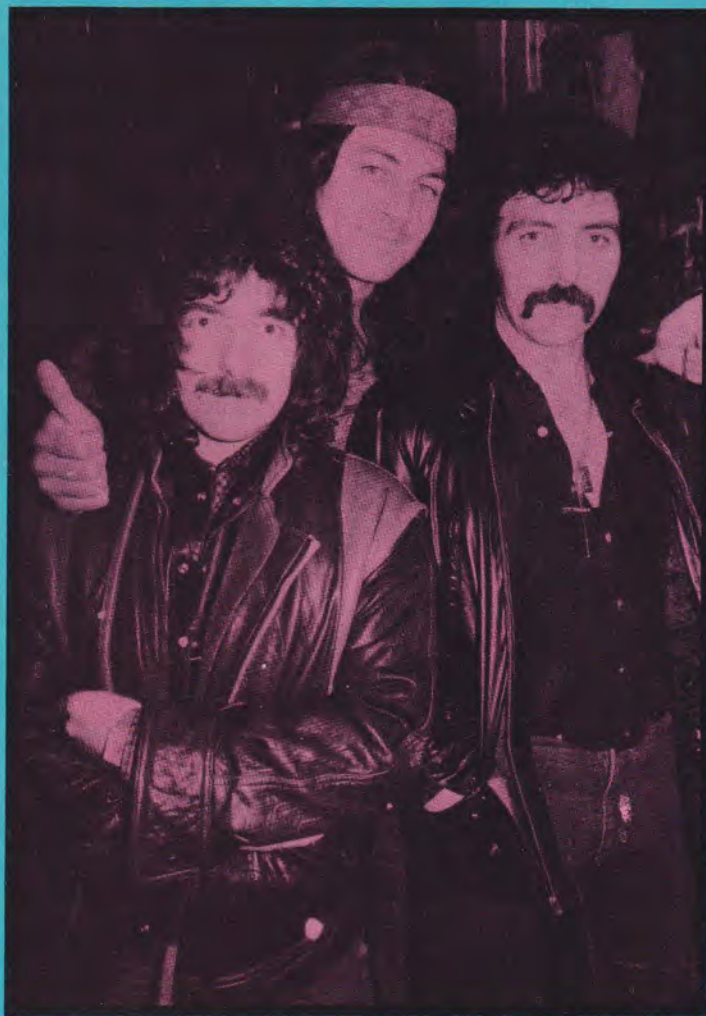
Eventually Ian sensed this would get us nowhere and plunged into an explanatory address.

"What's happening is that I'm singing with the band and Bill Ward is officially back. We've been rehearsing for two weeks and we're all very excited. We've been writing a song a day and the plan is to go into the studios and then play some festivals in Europe in May and June. We will also play a major festival in Britain but we can't say when."

"Would that be in August — say around Bank Holiday?" asked the wag. Laughter and nods, from which we deduced they probably will be playing the Reading Festival. They will also be touring America and hope to get their new album out in September.

"The idea is to get out on the road and do the business," said Ian, beaming from beneath his famous headband and mass of curls. "You can tell Geezer is very excited about it," he added as Geezer sat sphinx-like, observing proceedings.

But Geezer became much



GEEZER BUTLER, IAN GILLAN and TONY IOMMI: "We've already tried out 'Paranoid'! (pic by Ross Halfin)"

more animated when I talked to him after the formalities at the microphone were over. What happened between Sabbath and Ronnie Dio?

"He was a pretty moody person," explained Geezer.

"He also has a powerful personality and he was trying to take over the band. We've been together so long we are used to people being on each other's wavelengths. We've had our problems in the past but they have only been caused by changes in musical direction."

"We were very easy going with Ronnie and it was his last chance to make it big through us. But Vinnie and Ronnie began working on a solo LP together — and we didn't know about it! It was while we were mixing our live album."

Relations grew strained and, in the meantime, the original

Sabbath boys kept in touch with their old drummer, Bill Ward, now living in LA.

"Bill had a small band that did clubs and bars. He'd been ill for a long time and got hepatitis back in 1976. Because of our hectic schedule he couldn't rest and it took its toll. Then his mother and father both died in the same year and Bill was going through a helluva time which we didn't really understand. In the end he had to go, but now he's had a rest and wants to play. It's a new era for the band and we're really looking forward to it."

"We've always been a touring band. It's in our blood. We have to do it. It's funny, I used to think I would have packed it all in by the age of 25, but here I am at 33, still doing it!"

Would Sabbath fans accept Ian Gillan out front?

"That remains to be seen but

we think he will fit in really well. Black Sabbath material really suits his voice. We've been jamming together and he blends in very well. We want to do an LP first for the band to establish itself.

"Ian comes from the same sort of musical background as us and we get on fine. Ronnie was doing too many things behind our backs."

Did he turn up the vocal track on the Sabbath album while they were out of the studio?

"Yeah," said Geezer. "We've always had a heavy sound and we couldn't have the vocals drowning out the drums, bass and guitar! Ronnie denies he did it but, in fact, the engineer told us about it. When you are in the studio mixing all day you can't tell what's happening after a while."

"Ronnie does have a strong personality, but he overdid it in the end. You can't work that way. You have to get on with people. Ozzy slagged us to death after he left us but when we saw him after two years he came to the hotel at 4 am and we had a really great time and all the bad feeling was forgotten. It's sad when these upsets happen. We were genuinely pleased when Ozzy did so well in America."

"I was doing the ironing when I hit my head on a beam!"

Will Ian be happy singing old Sabbath material?

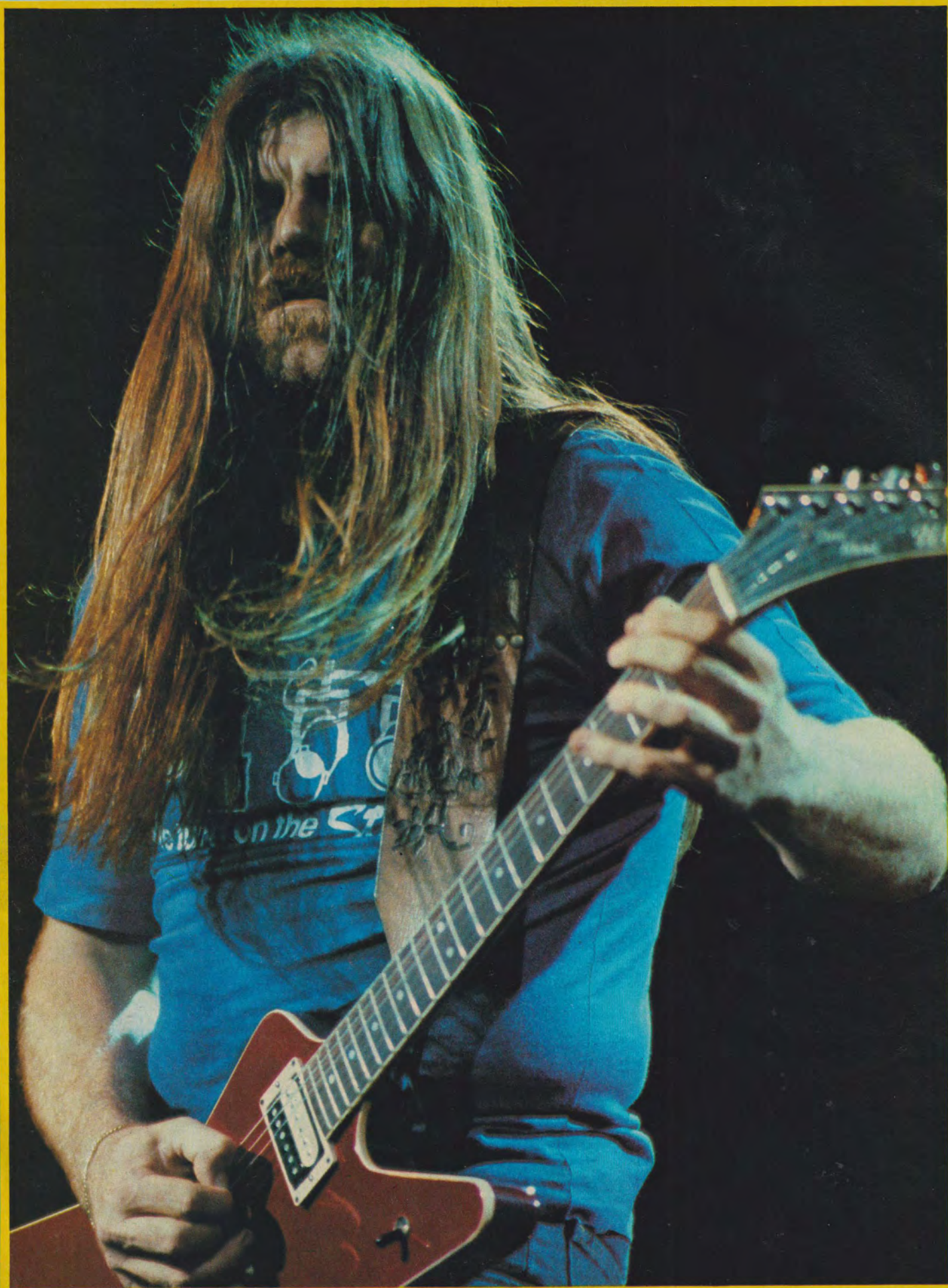
"I'll do some obviously, and we've already tried out 'Paranoid'. When I was coming up with Deep Purple, Sabbath were coming up at the same time, so I'm from the same era really and we have the same musical influences."

What happened to his last band and what was the current condition of his voice? (It was stated that Ian had had to pack up singing, and the Gillan band, because of severe vocal trouble).

"I had these nodes on my vocal cords, but it's okay now," he said, not wishing to dwell too much on the subject. "That band did 11 LPs and 19 tours and you have to keep fresh. When you've reached a peak with something I think it's a good idea to make a change."

"Sabbath have been through a lot of musical changes too, but basically it's a rock/blues band. Don't call it Heavy Metal! The thing is we've all come through the same clubs and pubs, we have the same sense of humour — it's gonna be a great crack! I'm looking forward to a productive and exciting three years ahead."

CHRIS WELCH



HATCHET MAN

Molly Hatchet's Dave Hlubek (pictured left) gets tough!

HERE IS the news: Molly Hatchet have a new album released on Epic, entitled 'No Guts ... No Glory' and have recently completed a move which is virtually unprecedented for an American band in recent time.

What is this strange phenomenon? Hatchet are hardly known innovators in the field of music now, are they? 'No Guts ...' has the feel of any common or garden Southern Rock album, but the band have *actually played in Europe* before setting out on the traditional mammoth trek across the green and pleasant land which is America!

Novel, and a decent doffing of the cap to European power, but it's a pity that their album is less than earth-shattering. A raucous romp through every southern fried lick ever created, for sure, but hardly a hint of anything particularly stimulating.

Not that I'd like to argue the toss with lead guitarist Dave Hlubek, a fearsome looking gent with a penchant for toting double barrelled shotguns at anyone who dares cast a disparaging glance at the sleeve of the latest Hatchet opus.

I'll put it to you straight - I was damn glad to be sitting secure in London while he hollered down the line from downtown Jacksonville, Florida. A point in his favour. Dave does miss Britain and was a mite miffed that he couldn't play in the UK during the European sojourn - and not only for the music:

"I felt really bad about not making it over there, 'cos London town has gotta be the best place in the world for boots. I found this place in Kensington Market that crafts personalised boots by hand for you, with superb three inch heels. I'd really like to visit that place again.

"Apart from that, I still have fond memories of appearing at the Reading Festival - it's a long time since we appeared," he drifts on wistfully.

"We don't wanna forget that there's another world out there and we'd like to come back to Europe in four or five months' time, get a slot at Reading and maybe even do a tour leading up to it.

"I'd rather build up our following in Europe over the States 'cos there's such a thing as burnin' out over here. Besides, people in Europe know their stuff alright. There are some people who have the attitude of 'out of sight, out of mind' but my view of the situation is that 'absence makes the heart grow fonder'."

Nice to feel so wanted isn't it? God, we're all blushing! Back home once again, Dave is preparing to go out on the road to promote 'No Guts...':

"We need to go out and work to push this record because the market isn't anywhere near as buoyant as it was when we first started. 'Flirtin' With Disaster' sold two million albums whereas my last album only did around 450,000. 'Flirtin' went gold in five weeks and it's taking me longer than before. I've sold over 200,000 already but I'm going for gold 'cos I know this is a gold, and even platinum album!"

HAVE YOU noticed the reference to Hatchet product as 'my album'? Is this something of a confederate dictatorship? Are the other Hatchet he-men anything more than cigar-chewing charlatans, wolfs/wimps in sheep's clothing, running to the beck and call of Mr. Hlubek? It's never been spelt out in this way before, but Dave is unabashed in his role as rock guru:

"I call the shots," he states categorically. So he performed the hatchet job on those three bastions of excess weight, excess receding hairline and excess crassness in vocalist Jimmy Farrar, bassist Banner Thomas and drummer Bruce Crump respectively. Losing your Crump must be close to the end and many knowledgeable brains had diagnosed a final curtain being drawn down over Molly. Dave denies:

"There was one song on the album, 'Fall Of The Peacemakers' which took me a year to write - that was why we've been away! I decided that at the time I needed new blood in my band because we needed to update our sound. This is 1983 y'know, not 1979. I needed a new outlook, a broader perspective on how things were going as regards the international market.

"I didn't want to carry on churning out 'Flirtin' With Disaster' for the umpteenth time, so I brought in new influences in BB Borden, who used to drum with Mothers Finest, Riff West on bass from a band called White Witch and of course Danny Joe Brown, who's returned to the fold."

Howcum?

"He missed me of course."

Dave erupts with laughter.

"You can tell that I'm a great guy. He didn't do good with his solo album. His musicians were green. They just wanted to make a record. We always knew we'd get back together, 'cos we've been jamming with one another for two years!"

But isn't "No Guts ..." simply a re-hash of

your own previous Southern Boogie outings or are my ears in need of re-tuning?

"No way! It's fresher and better both lyrically and musically. The sound is better (possibly because Dave co-produced for the first time?) and it's picking up great airplay in the US, with super bullets on the Billboard charts."

What about those of us who see a real need for a dramatic change in Hatchet approach for the band to avoid slipping into a rut?:

"I'm not gonna change. I am what I am and you can take it or leave it. If you don't like it, then f*** off! The top rock bands in the States are all cutting their hair to conform, but I'm gonna die with long hair down to my ass! I've had long hair since 1960 and the likes of Andy Gibb look like faggots. I don't care about fashion, all I'm bothered about is getting a good sound out of my guitar neck!"

"This album isn't all Southern Rock anyway. OK, we did a song called 'Sweet Dixie' but 'What Does It Matter?' is simple crunch rock. We're a heavy duty Rock 'n' Roll band from the south, that's it!"

That's a point to debate (ie. I'm not sure if I agree) but Dave has his aims - and he's sticking to 'em:

"I've been married for thirteen years and that's no mean feat in this business. I have two young children, aged seven and three, and it's the survival of the fittest in this game. I play my music to feed my family and myself. I'd fire my own mother if she got in the way of my doing that!!"

Guts he has. Dave believes the glory is to come. No-one will divert him from seeking his goals in life, and you've gotta respect that!

**HOWARD
JOHNSON**



Molly Hatchet from left Steve Holland, B.B. Borden, Duane Roland, Danny Joe Brown, Dave Hlubek, Riff West.

■ **MEATLOAF** In No Bread Shocker! Yes Loafers, despite selling nearly eight million copies of the 'Bat Out Of Hell' LP it seems your main man is stony broke. In a petition filed with the New York Bankruptcy Court Marvin Lee Aday (Loaf's real name) lists his assets as a mere 167,688 dollars and his liabilities as a staggering 1,587,162 dollars.

Meatloaf has told the bankruptcy court that there is no more money due to him from the first two Meatloaf albums and that even his new album (reviewed on page 12) may not bring him any dough because he's already had it all in big advances!

Meat says his problems are partly due to legal hassles he's involved in, chiefly a dispute with his former manager David Sonenborg who's suing him for a hefty 10 million dollars. Meatloaf has asked the court to allow him to carry on his business and estimates his living and business expenses for the next 30 days to be about 15,000 dollars. That's an awful lot of Big Macs!

■ **PS:** Meatloaf's new album has been so long coming (an advert in *Kerrang* has been postponed three times, for example) that Epic Records have sent reviewers a nifty red apron emblazoned with 'Meat's Nearly Ready'. None of us here can cook but it's great for eating Big Macs in!

■ **THE LORDS OF THE NEW CHURCH** were recently to be heard cranking out a new single, a cover of that old fifties chestnut 'Live For Today', with none other than **Todd Rundgren** at the controls. The style is reported to be on a more commercial slant than their previous efforts with a release date scheduled for May. The B-side has yet to be decided and there's no word on the progress of the album either. You'll hear it when we do.

■ **JUST IN** case you thought they might have been taking it easy after their record-shattering trek around the world to promote the 'The Number Of The Beast' album **Iron Maiden** have now recorded a new single entitled 'Flight Of Icarus', a track penned by **Adrian Smith** and **Bruce Dickinson** who gets his name onto a song-writing credit for the first time since joining Maiden. The B-side is a cover of Montrose's 'I've Got The Fire'. A new album, believed to be called 'Piece of Mind', is due for release imminently, again produced by Martin Birch.

■ **THOSE WELL-KNOWN** workaholics **Bad Co.** may still have something to offer, as **Simon Kirke** has found time amidst their busy schedule to play drums with **Wildfire**, who have an album out on Swansong on May 15. What with that and guitarist **Mick Ralph's** solo album out soon, things are getting positively hectic!



■ **ROCK'N'ROLL** antiquity buffs take note: Hammerwood Park, situated amidst the rolling hills and idyllic countryside of West Sussex, near the town of East Grinstead, was built by Benjamin Henry Latrobe in 1792. Latrobe also designed and built the Capitol in Washington DC and redesigned all the exterior porticos for the White House, both of which buildings show the influence of their predecessor, Hammerwood House. Hammerwood House is an exquisite example of Georgian architecture and one of only two such buildings that Latrobe constructed in this country.

Confused? What's all this doing in *Kerrang*? Well, let us shed some light on the situation. Hammerwood House is the country estate that once belonged to those gentlemen of the rock world, **Led Zeppelin**. Zeppelin's stay was brief but memorable, if only to the neighbours, and they reportedly left in their wake a garage full of white Rolls Royces!! The house changed hands, was converted into a block of flats (typical!) and then sadly left to fall

■ **BLACKFOOT'S** long-awaited new album should be in the shops 'sometime in May'. Said piece of plastic will bear the mysterious title, 'Siogo', (no we haven't a clue what it means either, but look out for the explanation in a soon come feature). The band's first studio LP in almost two years, it not surprisingly sounds a little different, with ex-Uriah Heep man **Ken Hensley** making his keyboard contribution felt on all 10 tracks. A sneak preview revealed that these include a cover of **Nazareth's** 'Hearts Grown Cold' as well as titles such as 'Send Me An Angel', 'We're Goin' Down', 'Sail Away' and 'Driving Fool'.

■ **SHADES RECORDS**, the Rock Specialist record shop in St. Annes Court, London, which we reported on in issue 35, has now had a telephone installed to help eager collectors in their search for the ultimate Metallic Slab Of Vinyl. 'Modest' Mike Shannon is now taking orders and enquiries for imports and more regular rock products and can be contacted on 01-434 1363.

■ **LAHM ACT** **Hellion** have replaced bassist Peyton Tuthill, whose departure we understand had nothing to do with having a rather silly name but was in fact due to that old chestnut, 'musical differences'. Joe Wilde, formerly of **Americade**, takes his place.

into a state of disrepair.

The place has now thankfully been snapped up and restoration work is currently in progress under the direction of the new owners, Mr & Mrs Pinnegar and their son David.

Hammerwood House is open to the public every Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday so if you fancy walking where famous feet have trod and gazing out over glorious views that may well have inspired Messrs Page and Plant to some of their more epic songs, then the chance is now yours.

Hammerwood Park makes for a very pleasant days outing so get along and grab yourself a slice of your country's and rock'n'roll's history in one go!!

Movement in the **Zeppelin** camp? Rumour has it **Led Zeppelin** manager **Peter Grant** booked studio time last month at Ambience Studios in Burgess Hill, Sussex. But precisely who was using that time remained a closely guarded secret. In typical Swansong style 'Mum' was the word and we can only wait in eager anticipation. **DAVE DICKSON**

■ **CONFUSED REPORTS** reaching the *Kerrang* offices concerning the recording of the new **MSG** album at Ridge Farm studios in Dorking, Surrey, caused no little consternation and raised eye-brows amongst your favourite hacks. It seems that **the Schenk** threw the proverbial 'wobbly' and proceeded, so we're told, to rip a pay-phone off the wall and generally go around upsetting all the staff there who then refused to work with the hapless guitarist. **Michael** then either left or was ejected, we're not sure. However, this particular tale of woe at least has a happy ending with **Schenker** returning to patch up his differences and continue the good work. When we know a little more about the musical content of the forthcoming platter we'll let you know.

■ **MEANWHILE**, **MICHAEL'S** former partner in crime **Phil Mogg** will not be quitting the boards forever as has been suggested after the announcement of the break-up of **UFO**. *Kerrang* understands the vocalist will be recording a solo album on completion of the **UFO** tour currently in progress at the time of writing. Plans for the other members of the band as yet remain uncertain.

■ **KERRANG!'S MAN** on the spot recently risked life and limb by venturing into Park Gate Studios in the wilds of the Sussex countryside to grab an earful of the new **Hanoi Rocks** vinyl extravaganza. Produced by **Mott The Hoople's** dynamic duo, **Overend and Buffin**, at the time of writing the recording had been completed and only the mixing remained unfinished.

Called 'Back To Mystery City' the album contains tracks such as the sensitively titled 'Tooting Bec Wrecked', 'Lick Summer Love' and 'Until I Get You' and should be ready for release in time for the band's up-coming 30-date British tour. In the meantime **Hanoi Rocks** have taken off for Israel to play a few dates to the unsuspecting, generally annoy the natives and sharpen up their market-square 'haggling' skills. The British tour is also expected to include certain dates with the redoubtable **Marionette** playing support, one of whose many claims to infamy is that they once boasted current **Hanoi** drummer **Razze** amongst their number. In a rare moment of modesty **Marionette** leader and 'vocalist' **Ray Zell** commented: "Ha, if you thought **Mike Monroe** was good wait till you see me!! We're gonna wipe the floor with them!!" No comment from the **Hanoi** camp was forthcoming, however.

But the album? Lead guitarist and song-writer **Andy McCoy** pronounced: "It's gonna be great!!" And the *Kerrang* view? Well, when our reporter had calmed his fractured nerves a nurse reportedly heard him claim that the new platter was: "so hot it'll probably melt before you get it on the turntable!!"

■ **SOUTHEND ROCKERS** **Le Mat** release their debut album on April 22. Entitled 'Waltz Of The Fool', it will be coming out through **Whaam Records**, and will feature material that represents what the band have been playing live for the past year or so.

■ **TERRAPLANE** have just issued a four-track, 12-inch single on **City Records**. Featured on one side are studio tracks 'I Survive' plus 'Gimme The Money' (recently issued as a seven-incher). The other side has live versions of 'I Want Your Body' and 'Turn Me Loose', both of which appeared on the 'Reading Live' LP. The band are also planning to record some fresh demos, with former **Wombles** stalwart **Mike Batt**!

■ **HARD ROCK** super-expert **Derek Oliver** is currently putting together a compilation album of melodic, inventive hard 'n' classy rock bands for his new label, **Passion Records**. The accent is on American sounding troupes but nationality has no importance. If you fancy your chances at impressing with professional sounding music, send your tapes to **Passion**, 190 Doyle Gardens, Harlesden, London NW10 3SX. **Angel** and **Journey** soundalikes especially welcome.

■IF YOU'RE quick, you'll be able to catch the tail-end of an interesting exhibition of photo/graphics at the Postcard Gallery in Central London's Neal St. A retrospective exhibition spanning 14 years' work from the files of **John Pasche** and **Phil Jude**, it includes the original artwork for two of the **Rolling Stones**' tour posters, as well as their legendary 'lips' symbol. The exhibition, though, ends on April 23.

■HAVING JUST worked on **Ronnie James Dio's** forthcoming solo LP, Scots bassist **Jimmy Bain** is now ensconced in Abba's Stockholm-based studio, guesting on the new **Scorpions** album. However, the reason for his involvement remains shrouded in mystery. For, long-time bass-man **Francis Buchholz** has, as far as we can ascertain, certainly not been incapacitated either by illness or injury. Nor for that matter has he quit, or been sacked by, the band. So, just why has the **ex-Rainbow/Wild Horses** star been roped in? Bain himself, when contacted recently by *Kerrang!*, was very reluctant to talk about the project and, to date, not a whisper on the subject has escaped from official **Scorps** sources. Doubtless, this is one story that will not lie down and go away in the coming months.

■ALTHOUGH NO official confirmation has yet been received, it seems likely that US Metal acts **Americade** and **Virgin Steele** will be coming to the UK later on this year for a double-headed tour. If this plan comes to fruition, it will be the first time either of these much-touted bands has appeared on a British stage.

■US METAL/popsters **Storm** have been struck once more by bad luck. Having just released their first album for Capitol Records (reviewed a couple of issues back in *Kerrang!*), the band's plans to play live dates both in the States and Europe have been scuppered because drummer **Jimmy Munroe** (who only recently replaced **David Devon**) has been the victim of a car-crash. So bad are the resultant injuries that it's unlikely he'll be fit for rock 'n' roll action before the end of the year. So now, the band are caught in a dilemma: do they wait for Munroe to be given the medical all-clear before recording their next album (in which case, given the length of time this newbie took to do, we can't expect any new **Storm** vinyl product before early in 1986!) Or do they call in a temporary replacement? At present, it seems the band favour the latter course of action, because already at least one potential stand-in has been contacted about his availability.

■TSK, TSK. Careless **Diamond Head** guitarist **Brian Tatler** managed to drop his prized Flying V during a recent recording session at London's Battery Studio. In doing so, the neck of said axe parted company with the body, and as a result the band have had to delay recordings for the new album because Tatler is being forced to hire a number of guitars as replacements. Perhaps next time, he'll be a little less carefree, huh?

■GOOD NEWS from the USA. **Legs Diamond**, once among the most popular of American heavy acts, seem to have reformed. According to communications we've received from the band's West Coast Agency, Tomcat, Diamond's erstwhile vocalist **Mike Prince** has got the combo back into shape, and they're presently in rehearsals, looking to clinch a new record deal as soon as possible.

UDO'S THERE



■TYNE-SIDE Metal Merchants **Raven** have recently emerged from the studio after recording a new album, heroically entitled 'All For One One For All', with ace Teutonic knob-twiddlers **Michael Wagener** and former **Accept** vocalist, **Udo Dirkschneider**. The band laid down a mammoth 14 tracks in as many days, 10 of which are now set to appear on the album.

Leaving no holds barred in the track listing stakes, they've come up with the following running order. Side 1: 'Take Control', 'Mind Over Metal', 'Sledgehammer Rock', 'All For One One For All', 'Run Silent Run Deep'. Side 2: 'Hung, Drawn &

■MORE NEWS on the Marquee celebration front. **Rock Goddess** are set to appear on May 8, whilst the fabled figure of **Long John Baldry** is set to return to the club with an all-star backing band three nights before on May 5.

■SAD WORDS from the Dumpy camp. It seems that **Dumpy's Rusty Nuts** bassist **Jeff Brown** has now left the band, forcing the first personnel change in a year. His replacement is noted South London session man (it sez 'ere) **Kerry Langford**, although whether he is joining on a permanent basis or just for the duration of their current tour is as yet uncertain. The band, meantime, are set to record a new single for mid-June release.

■DESPITE THE imminent departure of **Roger Hodgson** from their ranks, the word is that **Supertramp** WILL continue to record together as a band. The outfit are presently working out recording plans for a new concept album, based around the theme of 'Brother, Where You Bound?' Apparently it will see the band returning to the heavier format of 'Crime Of The Century', and is to be recorded after their summer touring schedule is concluded.

Quartered', 'Break The Chain', 'Take It Away', 'Seek & Destroy', 'Athletic Rock'. In addition they're recorded a cover version of that old chestnut 'Born To Be Wild' as well as a song called 'Inquisitor', the vocals on both being shared by **Herr Dirkschneider**; the two tracks may be used as B-sides in the future.

At present the choice of single is still being considered, with 'Take Control' and 'Break The Chain' being the likeliest contenders. The band have no immediate plans to tour the UK but dates have been lined up in both Holland and Germany for the end of June.

■MANCUNIAN GLAMSTERS **Sacred Alien** are to release a new single (their first in over two years) in the near future. As yet no details are available on either the firm date of release or on the label it will be put out through. Moreover, the band have yet to decide on what the A-side will be. However, the B-side will contain a live version (or a newly recorded studio one, at any rate) of 'Spiritual Planet', whilst **Pluto Studios** in Manchester will be the venue for this mega-recording session.

■HEAVY LOAD, those well-known Swedish metallurgists, are hoping to come over to England for an autumn tour. No details have been confirmed as yet. However, plans are definitely in hand for the band to play a series of club dates around October. In the meantime, 'Death Or Glory', their second LP, is currently the most popular new HM album in the Bay Area of San Francisco — or at least it is on the local heavy rock radio station. Indeed, so much interest has been expressed in them over there that a fan club is to be started up on their behalf. Run by a certain **Sam Cress**, it can be contacted at: 1343, 32nd Street, San Francisco, California 94122.

■A NEW pic disc label has just been launched in Canada. Called **Visual Vinyl**, it's aim is to release records in picture form, with a non-playing B-side, thereby providing a nice gloss for the enclosed photos.

First records to get such treatment are an EP by **Lee Aaron** (featuring the legendary *Kerrang!* centre-spread on one side, and a reproduction of a picture from the latest issue of *Oui* magazine, on the other), plus an EP by the strangely monickered **Black Magic** entitled 'Spellbound', and featuring a rather titillating picture disc representation. **Black Magic** is actually the name of the scantily-clad vocalist, and this EP also features two backing singers, plus several 'well-known' Canadian heavy-weight musos, who for 'contractual reasons' wish to remain anonymous. There are plans afoot apparently to turn **Black Magic** into an all-girl seven-piece band!

Visual Vinyl also plan to re-issue both **Kevin Wet** EPs in pic disc form, to be followed in May by the man's first album, as well as 'Be My Slave', the debut **Bitch** LP.



■CONFUSION HAS certainly been reigning in the **Rock Goddess** camp. After their recent UK tour with **Def Leppard** (which apparently went rather well for the girls), blonde bassist **Tracey Lamb** dropped a major bombshell by announcing that she was quitting the band. However, within a matter of days, the differences between her and the rest of the band were sufficiently resolved for her to return to the fold in time for their current support slot on the **Fastway** tour.

The exact reason for her original decision to depart remains rather mysterious. Group manager **John Turner** would only say that "there were certain aspects of this kind of life she didn't like". However, these aspects might have more to do with the band's set-up than anything else. It's been well-known for a long time that **Tracey** felt like an outsider, surrounded as she was by the **Turner** family (John, plus his daughters **Jody** and **Julie**). It seems more than likely discontentment with such a situation eventually led to her 'I quit' announcement. Whether, this problem has now been resolved permanently remains to be seen.

In the meantime, the band have now added a new guitarist, **Kat Burbela**, 20, from Hull, to the line-up, a move prompted by their realisation that as a three-piece they were more limited than at first seemed the case. What does seem significant is that pressure, apparently, was brought to bear by the American side of the **Goddess** operation for this expansion to be made. And given **Girlschool's** current surge of Stateside success, one wonders if **Rock Goddess** are to be marketed as 'The New Girlschool'.

However, there are no immediate plans for the band to go to the USA. After their **Fastway** commitments, they will be recording some new material in June, before touring with **Iron Maiden** on part of the latter's massive European trek.

ZZ TOP 'Eliminator' (WEA)

AN INCREDIBLE band this ZZ Top... the Texan trio would probably win hands down in any poll of musicians that featured in these pages yet they are virtually unrated – or unknown – by you the readers. Their meagre (just two) British concert appearances can be blamed for this because you really have to see the band to believe how good they are.

In the past their records have varied a lot and have generally only *hinted* at the on-stage magic. So it's a joy to be able to suggest that 'Eliminator' is their strongest yet, and a giant step in the right direction. In fact, the best album I've heard this year. That's no casual proclamation either but made because this record seems to have everything. Fans of long standing will love it and so I suspect will legions of new converts.

Occasionally they do sound like AC/DC as hinted in last issue's feature (especially on side one) but the Top have stamped on their unique brand but deliver all the power with one less guitar then dress it up with just a dash of synth and the rattle of tamborines. Both are so subtle that you will not notice it first, but added to the bare bass drums skeleton the mixture is totally infectious.

On side two the pulsing synths creep just a little more to the fore but make no mistake it's boogie all the way. Hard driving, mean (but not evil), low down cheap and sleazy. The pace only eases on a couple of numbers – for the bluesy work-out 'I Need You Tonight', (where Billy Gibbons absolutely excels himself on guitar) and for the wonderfully absurd 'Thug' which gives Dusty Hill on bass the spotlight, elsewhere Dusty's partnership with drummer Frank Beard is more restrained but relentless. A tighter than tight engine room that never seems to stop pumping.

Accompanying all this is that unequalled ZZ Top sense of humour: lyrics so weird that they are half way certifiable. (Plus one or two that you had better not let your mother study too carefully!) Check out 'TV Dinners', 'Got The Six' or 'Dirty Dog'... the final icing on the cake.

It's been a real struggle to keep the superlatives to a minimum because Eliminator just oozes quality which will defy you to sit still and could well displace that scratchy old Stones album as the *ultimate* party record. Buy it now: see what you have been missing all these years.

NEIL JEFFRIES

MEATLOAF 'Midnight At The Lost And Found' (Cleveland/Epic EPC25243)

MEATLOAF recently filed for bankruptcy in New York to the tune of 1½ million dollars; with a new album on the way one would expect him to be successfully fending off creditors with promises of an impending inflow of cash, but his star is on the wane. Listening to the album in question I think I understand how...

The Meatloaf/Steinman partnership was ideal, overblown nonsense delivered in a melodramatic, pseudo operatic bellow. The live OGWT film

clip of Meatloaf and Karla de Vito on stage performing 'Bat Out Of Hell' remains a classic, but everything else paled in comparison including the Meatloaf/Cher video, fun though it was. So now we come to this, a few desperate attempts to emulate the past, and a few badly hacked up shots at contemporary North American rock.

A couple of good songs lighten the load, 'Razor's Edge' and 'If You Really Want To' both benefitting from strong keyboard contributions that generate colour and strength only to be savagely attacked by 'The Voice That Is No More'. Bluntly, Meatloaf appears to be as bankrupt in the vocal department as he is fiscally, the effortless bellow blown out on the road. Tonally he is all over the place – Producer Tom Dowd must have had a lovely time mixing this – and never more than adequate.

Apart from the two songs already mentioned 'Keep Driving' and 'You Never Can Be Too Sure About The Girl' have their moments, but again they are severely debased by Meatloaf's vocal redundancy. The title track entices with a Steinman type title – and also nods at him lyrically with the line 'Silver bullets in the juke box' but nobody's likely to be taken in for long. This album contains too much undistinguished material and does too many horrid things to the better tracks. Forget it.

PAUL SUTER

CONEY HATCH (Mercury SRM-1-4056)

IT WAS way back in December of last year when the all seeing eyes and all hearing ears of *Kerrang!* first brought Coney Hatch to your attention, though it's only now that the Canuck four piece's debut album, which has been stacked and re-stacked on import shelves nation-wide, receives it's UK release. Wake up Phonogram!

How much import sales will detract from Hatch's progress remains to be seen, but whatever, this is an incredibly mature and thoughtful debut, packing the hard rock punch, but full of interesting ideas. Its overall feeling is similar to that of the late Max Webster, probably down to the production turned in by Kim Mitchell.

Kim has taken the basic strong and melodic themes Hatched by the band and instead of softening the playing for American airplay as is usual, he has brought out all the hot sweat and aggression of this power quartet to the maximum.

'Devil's Deck', opens up the first side and a storming number it is too. It pinpoints the Coney ability to come up with striking killer riffs which aid and abet the song rather than slaughter it to death. Vocalist/guitarist, Carl Dickson holds the act together with minimum effort and proves that he is the (slightly) commercial influence behind the band, as on the UK single 'Key Operator' where a simple piano lick rides in harmony over some ferocious axe play.

When bassist Andy Curran takes over vocally, the material develops a decidedly tougher edge: this alter ego roars in on four occasions, outstandingly on 'Stand Up' where Curran sounds spine-chillingly close to a vocalist's equivalent to Jack Nicholson (remember that leer in 'The Postman Always Rings Twice'!) Yeah, kinda manic!

The spark of originality springs up

time and again during the albums ten sharp songs, even on Dixons commercial tinged numbers such as 'Victims Of Rock' but no more so than on the album closer 'Monkey Bars', another outstanding riff complementing Currans vocals. It's the originality and flexibility of Coney Hatch that ensure that they will be around for a good few years yet.

HOWARD JOHNSON

P.S. Max Webster were heavy and original but look what happened to them. I'm putting my faith in you to reverse the trends. You won't let me down now will you?

FASTWAY 'Fastway' (CBS 25359)

NOW that all the hysteria and general furor surrounding the Fast Ones departure from the 'Izzy Whizzy Let's Get Busy' world of Motorheadsville has died down one can approach this review with quite a balanced perspective and initial hearings make it pretty damn obvious why Clarke snapped during the infamous Plasmatics pantomime saga. Landsakes Martha! this man's a serious muso and the album's general overall diversity/light and shade make it pretty apparent that his personal ambitions had long since strayed away from Motorhead's musical highway.

In fact the difference between this piece of plastic and 'Iron Fist' is so vast that there aren't words big enough in my dictionary to encapsulate the enormity of the chasm that split the terrifying triumvirate. It's interesting to note that since the upheaval MH have taken a more serious course/stance and judging by recent ruff mixes unleashed on my lobes in recent weeks the emphasis now weighs heavily on arrangements, quality songs and more than a slight emphasis on guitar playing although it must be pointed out that this refreshing/optimistic yet still energetic outlook would not have occurred without an upheaval in the ranks and the split was imminent on the cards long before the arrival of ol' gaffa nipples, Wendy O.

In Fastway, Clarke has been fortunate enough to employ the services of two dynamite musicians namely Dave King (vocals/acoustic guitar-dont panic folks the latter only occurs on one track as a prelude to a skull crusher) and ex Pie man drummer Jerry Shirley whose deaf 'n' dumbing is a sheer revelation. The man is a heavyweight from the old school tradition that reared such forces as the late/great John Bonham and in fact he is one of the most impressive players I've heard since the tragic demise of the ex Zeppelinite. Shirley's thunderous presence is felt throughout the album giving Fastway the ultimate HM seal of approval. King is a demonic, dynamo of a crooner with a range that has the stun power of a giant size can of mace. People have already compared him to a young Percy Plant but overall his contribution to the album sounds more reminiscent of early Geddy Lee. His phrasing and delivery reveal his blues roots – a singer with so much passion and feeling is a rare commodity these

days. Clarke never fails to surprise and impress me with some fiery, thoughtful lead work and searing riffing – all quite a step away from his forte with MH although he hasn't lost his penchant for power rock.

The icing on the ol' Kerranglike cake is Eddie Kramer's dynamic production work and judging by this masterwork should re-establish him in the top dog league along with other Mutts. Standouts have to be 'Another Day' 'Give It All You Got', 'Heft!' along with 'Easy Livin' which should be in the charts. By the time the group hits the live circuit all the songs will have achieved classic status.

And friends what's more than this, they did it Fastway!

PETE MAKOWSKI

BONNIE TYLER 'Faster Than The Speed Of Night' (CBS 25304)

HAVING harboured a secret desire for years to be able to fanfare a great Bonnie Tyler album, this collusion with Meatloaf's former tune-smith Jim Steinman seemed likely to be the disc to prove the point. Tyler's damaged vocals always promised great things but they tended to be applied to some highly average MOR material, and although most of Steinman's grandiose work leave yours truly a little cold there was a distinct possibility that the combined forces of the two might result in something a little special. They haven't.

There's a great deal of interest focused on this record at present and it's evidence of Bonnie Tyler's understanding – or desperation – that she agreed to make it, knowing full well that Steinman and not herself would be the stimulus for the interest. As it happens he has only contributed two songs – 'Faster Than The Speed Of Night' and 'Total Eclipse Of The Heart' – but his mark is nevertheless all-pervasive which means the album is overpowerfully huge, grandiose and indulgent (not necessarily a bad thing of course) ... and totally vacuous. Bluntly it's all wrapping and no gift inside.

Tyler shines throughout, expressive vocals strong enough to handle anything the production throws at them, but the lack of any dynamic edge tends to defuse the effect. The most successful track is probably the most restrained – 'Getting So Excited' is smokey and evocative, peaking on a powerful hook that's strong and effective. The song is ironically close to some of Rod Stewart's better efforts.

The remainder fall into the more expected quasi-operatic areas, although much less over the top than Meatloaf due to the fact that Bonnie Tyler's voice is actually controlled and expressive rather than a simple on/off quiet/loud affair, allowing a little more breadth to the delivery. 'Have You Ever Seen The Rain' (the old Creedence song) works but throws in a few textures too many and turns a potential silk shirt into a bulky sweater, with the likes of 'Straight From The Heart' donning a couple of heavy overcoats too. Bonnie battles as best she can and it's probably fair to say that her vocals are the only actually impressive thing about this album.

PAUL SUTER

+IMPORTS+IMPORTS+IMPORTS+

THE RODS 'In The Raw' (Shrapnel 1005 Import)

SOMEWHERE out in the dark backwoods of American music, there's a beastie on the prowl. Ravenous for the taste of blood, it roams untamed and unseen, ready to pounce on quivering, unsuspecting wimps and blimps, foolish enough to stray from the main path, devouring 'em ... IN THE RAW.

This, then, is it, the album that should right the impotent wrong perpetrated by the limp sibling 'Wild Dogs', because whilst the latter had about as much snap as a damp packet of Rice Krispies, 'In The Raw' literally simmers with over-baked goodies.

Oh, sure, there are occasions when the lack of studio sophistication is just a mite off-putting. For instance, 'Evil Woman', with its smouldering epic build-up, could have done with some deft multi-track touches. But, well, you can't have everything, right? And if losing out on the finer points of recording techniques is the price that needed to be paid for the return of a rougher hew to the Rods, then here's one metal maverick who ain't complaining.

For the most part, 'ITR', has a startling line in bulging rifferama. 'Hurricane', 'Can't Get Enough Of The Fun', 'Streetfighter', and 'Hold On For Your Life' are typical over-amped Rods savagery, in that all four numbers balance pounding rhythms with astonishingly classy melodies. Especially worthy of Kerrangsters' attentions is the last-named, featuring a devastating tremelo-topped solo from 'Rock' Feinstein and a muscular hook I defy anyone not to find irresistible.

Elsewhere, the boys show that last year's tour with Judas Priest has had a decidedly beneficial effect, with both 'Go For Broke' and 'Hot Love' displaying a sensible dynamic proportion so redolent of the latter, nearly (but not quite) spilling over into mimicry. However, here's one band who can inculcate influences from all quarters without losing their own identity. So these cuts work quite brilliantly, opening up a new dimension for the Rods to explore on later albums, doubtless.

Yep, I can already envisage a solid mass of clanking crania cranking into action the moment 'In The Raw' bawls forth – and there's not a Supremes cover in sight! MALCOLM DOME

LOUDNESS 'Law Of Devil's Land' (B & M AF-7174-B Import)

I'M A sucker for formless, charming trash. My record collection is brimming over with this sort of stuff, because for some hidden reason I can't explain, I find it irresistible. Thus, despite all the cringing qualities of the third album from Jap wondermen Loudness, I'm compelled to proclaim it a thoroughly wonderful experience.

Hell knows what appeals to me about it. Despite titles like 'In The Mirror', 'Show Me The Way', 'Black Wall', and 'Mr Yes Man', all the songs are basically sung in Japanese, disconcertingly interspersed with occasional lapses into English (I distinctly caught the apocalyptic words 'Smash', 'power', 'oh' and 'yeah' intoned during 'Black Wall' – mega, huh?). And musically, things aren't much better. If you ever wondered what would happen if the Scorpions suddenly got a craving for Jim Steinman, then Loudness should solve that riddle.

What rip-off merchants they are, too. 'I Wish You Were Here' opens with the riff from 'Crazy Train' (I knew Ozzy was popular in Japan, but this is

ridiculous ...), whilst 'Mr Yes Man' nicks that classic Pavlov's Dog song 'Julia', adds in a touch of Scorpions 'The Zoo' and brazenly serves the resultant dish for public consumption.

But, for all their derivative sound, I still love Loudness with a singular fervour – because the whole package is presented with such guileless innocence, and no little talent. Even when they're ripping off the 'big noises', they manage to do it with an unmatched sense of cheek, carrying the songs to absurdly OTT proportions and, dare I say it, improving 'em. Add in the fact that they've also a fair smattering of brilliantly conceived true originals like the galloping nobility of 'Show Me The Way' and the title track (proving there is more to Loudness than other peoples' work), and what have you got? – one of the best goddam LPs 1983 is gonna throw up, that's what! MALCOLM DOME

MICHAEL BOLTON 'Michael Bolton' (Columbia)

NO, NOT the erstwhile UFO guitar swinger actually; in fact Michael Bolton doesn't really exist at all, but if you were to cite Michael Bolotin, once lead vocalist with US outfit Blackjack, then you'd be hitting the nail on the head.

Blackjack was a particularly uninspiring Polydor act with a speciality in unearthing nondescript numbers. Credit where credit's due, the band did come up with the stunning 'Welcome To The World' song, with the novel, if slightly sick intro, of the recording of a young mite emerging from the womb and they also nurtured Sandy Gennaro, the present Travers stool pigeon. I thought that would surely be the limit of Blackjack's contribution to world mayhem, but no! Here I am holding an absolute stunner of Hard Rock might, an album which is well in contention for pole position on the grid of the HJ top ten albums of '83 come December.

To be frank, Bolton (best pander to his new image, eh?) doesn't have the greatest rock voice in the world. It's a gravelly howl somewhere short of the great Bob Seger holler, and smacks more of a determination to be a singer rather than of any great aptitude for the job. However, it's not so offputting as to detract from the album's overall quality – and that quality stems from the dramatic improvement in songwriting from the Blackjack days and also the collection of musos drafted in here. Any fan of semi-obscure, supremely talented US rock bands is going to gape at, then grab a copy of this album with all speed, for it's a choc-a-block with grand musicians and songwriters. Listen to this little lot.

There's Bruce Kulick (guitarist with Blackjack and the Good Rats), Bob Kulick (Balance axe-man, songwriter par excellence and well-versed session player), Aldo Nova, Mark Clarke (Billy Squier's bassist, ex Heep and Rainbow) and Craig Brooks and Mark Mangold (vocalist and keyboardist respectively from the excellent Touch. Just 'cos Craig swallowed a bee at Donington it didn't mean you had to ignore the band!). Whew, some list ... and this fine collection of rockers has made the album really cut it, hard as hell and classy as anything you'll lend ears to.

All of the album's nine tracks are positive winners, from the opener 'Fool's Game', riding on Mangold's simple yet haunting synth, and piano play which backs some tremendously fierce guitar work, through to the closing 'I Almost Believed You', a smouldering rock ballad in the best

US AOR traditions. This for sure is one album to play loud – very loud!!

In between those numbers lie some truly magic moments. 'Hometown Hero' contains an instantly catchy Fleetwood Mac style chorus, beefed up to make the wait-like ones shudder in their flowing robes, while 'She Did The Same Thing' is probably the best track on display, crushing power chords complementing delicate keyboards rather than battling it out with them. The effect is simply stunning.

'Michael Bolton' retains all the best qualities of US Hard Rock while kicking vehement ass in the grand British tradition. You'd be a part of the 'Fool's Game' if you didn't get hold of a copy, pronto! Bolton is on the map – at last (only joking, Angry of Bolton!) HOWARD JOHNSON

BILLY THORPE 'East Of Eden's Gate' (Pasha PZ 38179 – US Import)

BILLY THORPE?! Doesn't have quite the same ring as David Lee Roth, no? It matters not 'tho, for his latest album contains plenty to raise rectums from reclining to rocking position. Featuring Frankie Banalli, animalesque drummer with the hot, new and revamped Quiet Riot, and the eternal wanderer Earl Slick, 'East Of Eden's Gate' holds a tremendously atmospheric feel within its grooves. The power and restraint is claustrophobic but makes you enjoy that intensity without feeling trapped, the title track encompassing the all with haunting keyboard fills and runs matched with loping drum power and stealthily delivered vocals. The song is devastating and has to be heard to be fully appreciated.

I swear that that number alone should make you spare some time for this album but 'Edge Of Madness' and 'Hold On To Your Dream' have got plenty to offer. The second side dips rather too drastically with a batch of ordinary numbers but 'East Of Eden's Gate' contains what should be heralded as some of the classic moments in Rock! HOWARD JOHNSON

WILD DOGS 'Wild Dogs' (Shrapnel 1003 Import)

THESE Wild Dogs (a quartet from Oregon) are not for those who expect a little intelligence with their music. And, thank goodness (or whoever else is responsible) for that! Quite honestly, when a band comes along and recycles old Purple/Priest licks with this much freshness as this lot, then it's almost as if they've never been heard before anyway.

There's enough absolutely astounding (yes, you heard correctly – ASTOUNDING) heaviness herein to satisfy even the most crucifixion-crazed metal hound. 'Take Another Prisoner', for instance, begins with a buzz-saw of guitars from Jeff Mark, before imploding into a singa-long chain-mail anthem that comes on a manner so redolent of prime Rods. Indeed, this is a significant influence all around, 'cos the entire feel of 'Wild Dogs' is rather akin to that of the New York trio's Arista album of the same title last year.

The difference, though, is that THIS piece of vinyl manages to combine class instrumentalism and tasty songs WHILE STILL RETAINING THAT ESSENTIAL RAGGED EDGE! When this lot burn the barrels, they make sure inflammable material is still stuffed inside.

Of course, as I've said, you'll have

heard it all before. But, whereas most bands who bash out old stuff never rise above mimicry, with 'Wild Dogs', the howl is matched by the bite. 'Life Is Just A Game', 'The Tonight Show' (whom some of you may remember from 'US Metal Volume III' last year), 'Never Gonna Stop', and 'You Can't Escape Your Lies' are the pick of the crop on show – and a choice harvesting of plump plaster-casts it is too.

So, go on, give this canine crew some house room. 'Wild Dogs' is guaranteed to be on the LOUD side of apocalyptic. MALCOLM DOME

EF BAND 'Deep Cuts' (Ewira LSPLP 103 Import)

ON WHICH Sweden's self-proclaimed numero uno heavy rock band stop sounding like a bunch of dust-bin amateurs, and make desperate efforts to broaden their credibility towards the international Rainbow/Journey melodic hard rock market.

I say 'try' because what this album shows up is the band's total lack of either initiative or inspiration. It's highly significant that the two songs which stand several heads above all else in terms of commercial appeal are both Russ Ballard numbers, viz 'Love is A Game' and 'Is Anybody There'.

It's ironic that only when the band drop their sub-melodic guard and go for the 'plop-plop-plop' sound of bruising metal via 'Tonight's Alright' do they cut through. Even then, most of the credit must go to guitarist Bengt Fischer, who is several classes better than the rest of the band, delivering with passion and verve.

If 'DC' is the best shot from Sweden's finest HM band, then all I can say is – come back ABBA, all is forgiven. MALCOLM DOME

EXCITER 'Heavy Metal Maniac' (Shrapnel 14 IMPORT)

SKELETAL rock lives, head for the acid-bath! If I were to tell you that Exciter are one Canadian band whom Paul Suter LOATHES, then doubtless you'll figure out for yourself this is no picnic of sweet-meat melodies, juxtaposed with intricate keyboards textures.

Ha, bleedin' ha! What this trio is about is the production of hack 'n' slash, dumb, limb-tearing metal. Nothing subtle, nothing fashionable – just turn it ON, turn it UP, and get wasted in the gutter.

From 'The Holocaust' to 'Iron Dogs', and 'Raising Of The Dead' to 'Cry Of The Banshee', Exciter race along on the back of a tank-tread bludgeon. And they do it so well, an' all! The bass/drums/guitars of Allan Johnson, Dan Beeher, and John Ricci respectively fuse together in a manner so redolent of Anvil, without the tenderness of the latter! Yes, folks, if you put this on to the turntable, prepare to be blurred into submission.

So, is this a goodie worth shelling out some hard-earned shekels for? Well, let me put it this way. If you're expecting a well-produced, highly crafted piece of plastic, then look elsewhere. However, if you are the sort who can accept a fuzzy sound, and Black & Decker number quality, then you'll find 'HM Maniac' a definite bargain. MALCOLM DOME

STAND UP AND BE CONEYED!

Pete Makowski batters down the Hatch

CONEY HATCH's Carl Dixon and Andy Curran



TAKE A classically trained guitarist, a looney bin located in the British countryside, a man (b)eating amazonian blonde and you have the ingredients that make up the recipe for a youngblood Canuke HM commodity collectively known as Coney Hatch. They're a relatively new Toronto-based band that have recently been taken under the guiding wing of SRO, Rush's management, which happens to be quite a useful situation when you're residing in Canada.

Since this David and Goliath relationship was officially consumed the band's work schedule has escalated, along with the fruition of a long term record deal with Phonogram, resulting in the release of a dynamite 12-inch single, 'Hey Operator' (b/w 'Devils Deck' and the outstanding anthemic 'Stand Up') that's left the majority of the *Kerrang!* staff frothing at the gills in anticipation of their long-awaited self-named debut album, available for some time in the Motherland.

The band features Andy Curran (bass), Steve Shelski (lead guitar), Dave Ketchum (drums) and Carl Dixon (lead vocals, rhythm guitar), a quartet still in their formative daze. Only three years old, the line-up revolves around the nucleus of Ketchum and Curran, who broke their proverbial chops touring the Southern Ontario circuit and

since then Hatch have followed a path similar to that pursued by senses shattering outfits like Anvil. Along with Twisted Sister, both Anvil and Hatch represent an every-growing backlash to the previously uncontested demands and rigours of the cocktail circuit, one that insists bands play sets virtually akin to K-Tel compilations, bereft of identity and originality. At the moment these valiant outfits are fighting a losing battle against a tradition that needs a major upheaval before the bar-room mentality will be swayed. The sad fact remains that for every Hatch/Sister that is barred from the US equivalent of Meccasville there are hundreds of hopefuls desperate to take their place. Only in Britain, it seems, can the likes of Hatch/Sister gain recognition.

As with many other debut offerings, 'Coney Hatch', the album, showcases material stored up and honed over a number of years. Everything sounds as if it was pretty much complete before studio treatment. It also shows the different songwriting styles of Andy and Carl who I interviewed, one cold and blustery Toronto morning, at the groups 'club hut'. The two hail from vastly different backgrounds; if they weren't in the same group they'd have very little in common – you can't imagine them socialising outside of the musical domain. Indeed, Hatch house quite a variety of tastes and styles, as Andy revealed:

"I would say that every person in the band has a different favourite group. I'm pretty much HM, I listen to all the stuff coming out of England – Def Leppard and UFO I've loved from way back. The closest I am to Carl, interms f taste, is Bad Company."

Carl: "I've always had a liking for things you can walk away singing to yourself. Songs with a melody and a good arrangement. I also like 'rough around the edges' rock and roll like The Stones, Bad Co., Free, Mott The Hoople and also AM radio from the seventies."

Andy is the quiet-spoken, introspective/introverted member of the group-offstage that is. Once behind a mike-stand, bass in hand, he turns into a fiery performer who, visually, comes over like a cross between Dan McCafferty and Silverwing's Dave Roberts. For the benefit of readers who missed out on Steve Gett's introductory feature on the band (you poor lost souls) a couple of months back, Andy along with Ketchum is the founder member of CH. Their partnership dates back to high school days, as he recalls:

"Right out of High School I started searching around for a couple of guys to start a band with an I met Dave through our old guitar player. We actually had three different guitar players before we came up with this line-up. Until then we were doing really lousy North Ontario bars and it wasn't until Steve and Carl joined that things started to look promising."

Carl is undoubtedly the extrovert of the group with a swaggering, loner 'living out of a suitcase' stance. The *hombre* with a rooving eye image is one he tries to exploit to its full potential, and his career background (*curriculum vitae* sounds a bit too posh for a rock and roll lifeline) reflects his general lifestyle:

"I was in a couple of bands before CH, one at high school and one I joined in Montreal called Firefly. This is my first recording band."

Steve Shelski proves to be something of a prodigy. Born with a plectrum in his mouth, he, at one time, forsook a career in r'n'r for more studious ambitions. Carl:

"Steve learnt jazz and got a degree. He then went on to play with a fairly successful group called Talisman."

Again for the uninitiated, the groups monicker came about after Andy accompanied his folks on a trek to their GB homeland where they took an excursion to re-tread their roots.

Andy: "It was my dad's dream to take us back and show us England, and he finally got to take us in '79. He took me for a mini-tour of the surroundings he was brought up in; y'known, showing me where his friends lived, and on one trek we passed this large old building which was completely surrounded by a brick wall. So I asked my dad whose house it was and he said it was Colney Hatch, the looney bin, and my mum told me stories about

how she used to run by when she was a kid 'cause she thought the inmates would jump over the wall and attack her."

Carl: "Looneys can jump higher than regular people."

Andy: "I think it's been changed into an old folks home now. Anyway, I liked the name and decided to use it, but I took the 'L' out to simplify things. We thought people would mispronounce it. Since then, though, we've been called things like Tony Hatch, and we've had chicks in the audience asking where Tony was!"

The group's first encounter with management was quite an unnerving affair as their mentor had quite a reputation for veering off the straight and narrow (No names will be mentioned to protect the corrupt).

Andy: "The guy was a 40-year old p-p-p (Yes, we get the picture). Well, he was an interesting character. He was a diabetic and lived with two dogs called Lamont and Margot."

Carl: "They got rid of him not long after I joined the band but uh - it was an experience for me. He used to tell me that he loved me and he'd do anything to have sex with me ... it was great!"

Andy: "Steve our guitar player went into the office one day to pick up our day-sheet to see where we were playing for the next week or so, and he closed the door and started chasing him around the room. Poor Steve was desperately trying to get to the door and he was holding onto his

legs. What a scene, just imagine. The guy had rug fur all over him and his glasses were falling off. Steve was pinned down screaming."

During this period the band were playing the aforementioned bar circuit and admit they weren't as adamant as Anvil about retaining their identity.

Andy: "Anvil always refused to play covers, they always did their own thing, though occasionally they'd throw in a bit of Ted Nugent. We went about things the other way around, though. We actually *did* do covers for a while, but we gradually tried to weed them out."

During this transitional period the group got their first major break when Pye Dubois saw them and was impressed enough to persuade the legendary Kim Mitchell, their producer to be, to check them out. Carl, recalls the day ...

"It was the first time I'd played Toronto with the band and I saw this guy in one corner writing down notes. Initially we all thought he was a reviewer. So, anyways, I asked him how he liked the band and he said he thought it was really great. When he introduced himself Andy asked him what Kim had been up to since the demise of Max Webster and a week later we found out through our management that Kim wanted to come down and see us. When he saw us he insisted on doing some demos."

In fact Kim was responsible for

putting hatch together with their current management.

Fortunately, their association with Rush hasn't been over exploited, mainly due to the fact that the band stand out in their own right and, in fact, had many offers prior to linking up with SRO.

Getting back to the material, we went on to talk about the tunes on the album which, on the whole, revealed themselves to be autobiographical. Andy's lyrics, it transpires, dwell mainly on the traumas of an unsuccessful sex life, which may seem hard to believe going by titles like 'Stand Up', ostensibly the ultimate 'do anything you wanna do' rebel theme, but in fact it has more woeful origins, as Andy reluctantly revealed:

"Carl and I would get into real weird situations with chicks and I'd always be the real wimp and not tell her to get lost. She'd end up punching me the next day. 'Stand Up' is really about this chick that beat me up."

What?????

Andy: "Well, I'll tell you this story, although I don't really like to talk about it ... We were playing Ottawa, it was the last set and we were all beered up, and these three chicks walked in and I think it turned out that they were all strippers. Anyway, there was this girl and she was HUGE, I didn't realize how huge she was until the next morning. She was really tall, and she bought me a drink, then the next thing I knew

we were up in my room drinking some more.

"The following day I realised what I'd done and I tried to hide from her the whole day. She wanted to know where we were playing for the whole week and, being dumb, I told her."

"So I show up for a sound check and sitting in the front row of the venue was this chick, waiting for me. We'd nicknamed her 'Hoss', 'cause she looked like that guy from 'Bonanza'. Anyway, she had nowhere to stay, I got liquored up and let her stay in my room. I knew then I'd hit rock bottom."

"So next day she said she wanted to talk to me and I said 'not now' and managed to ignore her. Then one of the crew said I'd better clear off 'cause the girl was mad at me; at that point she came in, so I bolted out the back door. She chased me for two blocks and finally caught up with me. I was just about to offer her a bus ticket home when she socked me with a left hook to the jaw ... she was wearing a ring! I remember walking down the road holding my head and there was all this blood."

Not quite up to Anvil standards, though Hatch make up for this limp libido with considerable musical muscle, a fact they should prove to everyone's satisfaction on an imminent British tour. Watch out, cos the Hatch interns are on the loose!



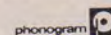
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CRUNCH TIME FOR OZZ.

Has the last dwarf been hung? DANTE BONUTTO speaks to Ozzy and his new boys.

"Since Randy got killed, I've had a lot of bad luck with players. Often they just want to stay with me to get a name before they launch their own careers. But I like to think the band now is as near as damn it permanent, though I sometimes wake up in the morning and wonder who's still here." — Ozzy Osbourne.

If, as they say, a change is as good as a rest, then Ozzy should by now be relaxed to a slumberous degree with only arch 'hire 'em, fire 'em' merchant R. Blackmore topping him in the sweet dreams stakes.

As with Rainbow, proof that perpetual motion can be achieved, musicians have passed through the Blizzard ranks at a steady rate of knots, a couple staying barely long enough to chip the paint-work let alone make a notable impression. Though at one stage, with the line-up comprising Randy Rhoads (guitar), Rudy Sarzo (bass), Tommy Aldridge (drums) and Don Airey (keyboards), you got the feeling that a bona fide band had at last been forged, one that was relishing the task of transferring its talents and on-the-road rapport onto vinyl. Sadly, it wasn't to be...

Despite the valiant efforts of Don Airey, a flying accident in Florida claimed the life of Randy Rhoads, a tragic occurrence that still haunts Ozzy to this day.

"I was really close to Randy," he confides, "we were very good friends. I don't think I can ever be that close to anyone again. His death was just an awful experience; I still dream about it now..."

From this point on things were never quite the same, as Rudy Sarzo, a longstanding friend of the late guitarist (the two played together in Quiet Riot), explained during a recent meeting in San Francisco...

"What happened was it just became a job. I never looked at the audience, I never looked at anybody else onstage, nobody did, it was simply guys up there playing and it wasn't like that when Randy was there. We'd enjoy ourselves then."

Faltering at this point, however, would certainly have signalled the end for the Blizzard so, rather than lock



pic Ross Halfin

himself away with his grief, the easy option, Ozzy set out to honour his commitments.

First Bernie Tormé filled the vacant guitar spot ("He played like a star for me, I love him"), then Brad Gillis, while, following Rudy Sarzo's decision to return to a reconstituted Quiet Riot, Ozzy's old drinking compatriot Pete Way joined him for the British dates towards the end of last year with Lyndsay Bridgewater, the near legendary figure who played keyboards on the Blizzard's first UK tour, called back to provide some offstage accompaniment.

The prospect of the British shows had long been savoured by fans and band alike but, in the event, they proved something of a letdown.

"I'd like to have done a longer tour without the stage production," says Ozzy, "but I'd

promised I'd bring the full set over. On the next UK tour I'll just play everywhere, smaller gigs, because you've got to treat England like England, not America. The kids at home have a different attitude, they don't get impressed by an explosion.

"I'm never going to take such a big thing over to England again, it's ridiculous. There's only three venues in the country you can put it in and, what with all that flak I got from the councils, it just isn't worth it. Hanging a midget?! I got the impression they'd had nothing to moan about for six months and this was giving 'em an excuse to have a meeting and a cup of coffee in an office somewhere."

Following the UK tour change again was in the air, with Brad Gillis and Pete Way leaving the ranks — the former

to rejoin Night Ranger, the band's 'Dawn Patrol' album looking set for chart action, and the latter to form his own group, Tommy Aldridge having made it clear that he could no longer handle the Way style of playing. The castle set, meanwhile, was quietly laid to rest...

In need of new musicians, Ozzy alerted his contacts on the West Coast of America where, after the customary tape-listening sessions and auditions, he came up with half Welsh/half Japanese guitarist Jakey Lou Williams (Jake E. Lee or Mr. Magoo for stage purposes) and half man/half animal Don Costa, an OTT bassist with a smattering of hot Italian blood that seems to have clotted somewhere around his reproductive tackle.

Though opposite in character — Jake reserved and quietly spoken, Don definitely NOT — the two have a surprising amount in common. Both hail originally from San Diego, a town some 150 miles south of Los Angeles, and both moved up to Hollywood four years ago, fed up with the bands they were in at home. They've even played on the same bills in LA, yet it wasn't until their mutual involvement with the Ozz that words were finally exchanged.

Don's route into the group was reasonably straightforward. Having heard of the job through friends, he simply sent along a tape and some suitably gross pics (see *Kerrang!* 35) and, after an audition in Dallas, found himself taken on — just like that.

Jake's entry, however, was a touch more complex as George Lynch of Dokken (yes, the mob head (banded) by Halfin fave Dan Dokker), having had a chance to be in the first Ozzy band, pre-Randy, but told not to take the gig by his manager (clearly a man of rare perception), was given first shot second time around.

He worked with the Ozz for a while but, not quite fitting the bill, Jake and a baby-faced Pat Thrallish guitarist called Mitch Brownstein were given their chance. Magoo (so dubbed by Ozzy due to a set of below-par peepers that make even hindsight difficult), despite arriving late for the audition at SIR in LA and, by his own account, rather fumbling

through 'Crazy Train' and 'I Don't Know', clearly impressed and, much to his surprise, was offered the job.

Five days later, after a lightning trip to England to rehearse the set, he and Don were flanking Ozzy on the stages of Europe where the Blizzard were playing support to a resuscitated Whitesnake. All go indeed . . .

Though I failed to catch any of these formative shows, word from the European front indicated that the mad one was, by and large, overcoming his natural, patriotic dislike of those not versed in the English tongue, and that the band were slotting nimbly into their stride. The American concerts that followed, however, were to prove a good deal more problematic, with the Southern State gigs inducing instant hysteria amongst bible-punching locals.

The thinking in these areas being nothing if not backward – the Klan is still a viable force here, sometimes encompassing figures in authority, and, while suspected witches are no longer put to the flame, those with prominently placed warts don't go to too many bonfire parties – it's hardly surprising that the arrival of the Ozz entourage should lead to wholesale leaflet-hurling, psalm-thrusting and record burning (apparently even Styx's innocuous offerings find their way onto the gas-stove so, yes, there is a bright side to it all). But, this time around, the whole 'son of satan' scenario began to acquire new, sinister overtones . . .

At one town, early in the tour, a so-called 'man of the cloth' gave a radio broadcast urging people to take a gun to the up-coming Double-O concert and do the "decent, American thing", while, elsewhere, a religious group phoned up saying they had a .38 and were coming along to the show for target practice.

This threat Ozzy didn't take seriously – "If someone's gonna shoot me they ain't gonna phone up and say so" – but the activities of the fanatical minority are, and indeed need to be, a cause of constant concern and several shows were, in fact, cancelled for security reasons.

"They'll always be some guy who thinks the only way to make my name is to waste this bastard," says Ozzy soberly. "But the big thing in the States

CONTINUES OVER



at the moment is playing records backwards and getting messages. I said to someone on the radio the other day: 'listen, man, why do you always pick on us, why don't you get a Frank Sinatra, Mantovani or some other old fart's album and play that backwards, you're bound to find some message'. They just go for us because a lot of older people hate to see young kids having fun."

In which case, Ozzy's appearance atop Le Roux, Vandenberg (his regular support on the US tour) and a very boring Blue Oyster Cult at a festival in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, must have had the over-the-hill brigade clutching their chests in despair. Despite poor organisation/conditions – the mud looking like a direct import from the battlefields of Donington and the makeshift stage boasting 16 (yes, 16) lights, a real comedown from the Ozz's current, extensive lightshow that lowers almost to head-height on hydraulics and moves in the shape of a bat(!) – the 10-15,000 up to their ankles in it start the time-honoured chant, undaunted. "UZ-ZY!, UZ-ZY!, UZ-ZY!..."

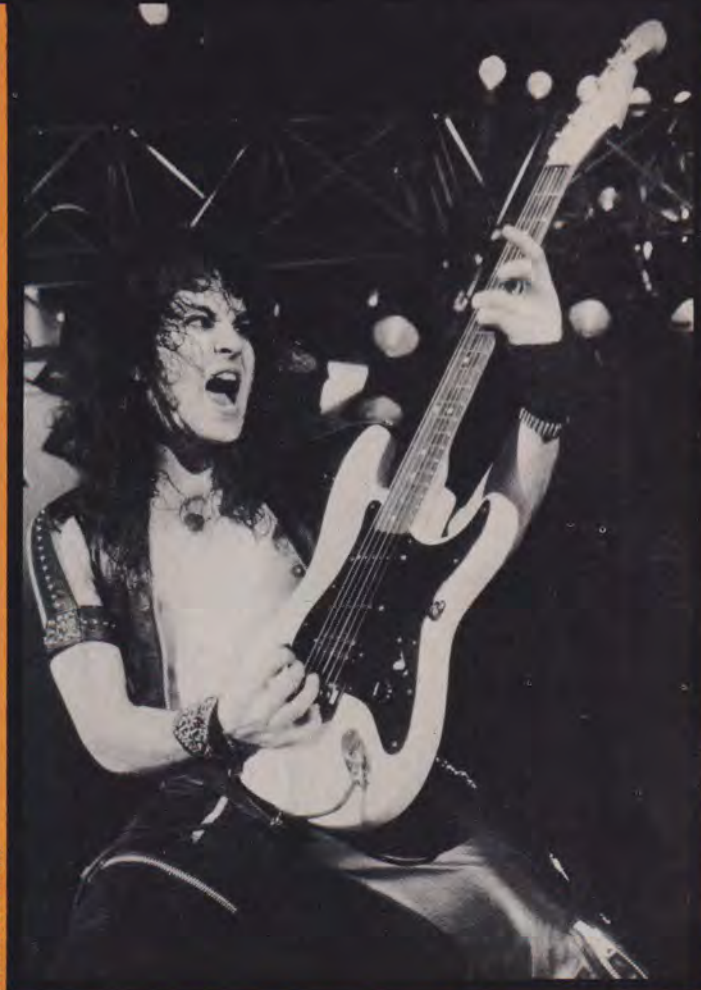
Backstage, the man in question takes delivery of half-a-dozen chocolate bats (evidently a gift from a sweet-toothed fan), all filled with a red, glutinous substance that spurts like prime Hammer ketchup when the head is bitten off, then darts onto the boards, arms vertically poised, for what proves to be a shortened set, with 'Crazy Train' sadly omitted.

In the event, however, it's a canny move as, due to the ravages of a long-standing throat infection, Ozzy's voice goes early in the set, dropping from a wail to a croak in the course of one fateful number.

Inevitably, this throws more pressure back on the band, but Tommy Aldridge, recovered from a close encounter with a bottle at an earlier gig (he needed three stitches), gives his usual professional display, his stability now providing a reliable prop for the fluctuating Ozz both on stage and off, while the 'freshers' run through their chops with distinctive style.

Only Don Airey, back with the group temporarily following Lyndsay's snap decision to head for the nearest leper colony and "cheer 'em up" (that's Ozzy's story anyway), seems rather out of place, it striking me that the current set isn't sufficiently keyboard orientated to warrant having the ivories in view. That, however, is something the band will have to sort out amongst themselves...

pic Ross Halfin



"The last time I was nervous was when I first got laid" – Jake E. Lee.

ALURID fascination with hack 'n' slash movies aside, Jake E. Lee comes across as a similar (offstage) character to Randy Rhoads – unassuming, hungry to improve as a musician (he practices at least four hours a day, sometimes six or seven) and content in his own company. He's also a shade gullible, something the rest of the band exploit to the full.

Just prior to my arrival in Baton Rouge, for example, the word was passed that I had a glass eye (not true, incidentally) and, feeling I might be embarrassed by this artificial port-hole and not sniffing a wind-up in the air, he went out of his way to avoid any face-to-face confrontation. A nice guy, though onstage, with one of his twin 'hot rodded' Strats in hand, he cuts an altogether more confident, aggressive figure, contorting himself into enough classic poses to keep *Guitar Heroes* in copy for a year.

Clearly no graduate of the Tony Iommi school of armoured dirge, his delivery is of the express variety with plenty of flash and feedback stirred in.

Given time and some material bearing his writing credit, he should have little trouble working up a fresh, recognisable sound... and he looks the part.

Blackmore, Bolin and Ulrich Roth may be his major influences, but, under the lights, he's more reminiscent of an Eastern version of Eddie Van Halen. The slight hollowness around the cheeks, the easy motion of the hips, the seamy, knowing glance, it's all there in abundance, making it hard to believe that he studied piano at the San Diego College Music Conservatory before falling victim to the siren-like lure of the distorted power-chord.

To make ends meet as a guitarist, he's played in funk, jazz and country bands, and even spent some time with the orchestra engaged for the San Diego production of 'Oklahoma'. Seeing no real future for himself as a bastion of the banjo, however, he finally made the move to LA, falling in first with Ratt, a Judas Priestly outfit notorious for lineup changes, then Rough Cut, a band Ronnie Dio's long expressed an interest in producing, then the Dio band itself, staying until the latter, deciding he wanted a more traditional, "European

sounding" guitarist, brought in Vivian Campbell from the Irish band, Sweet Savage. At one point, there was even talk of him joining Mötley Crüe...

"Mick (Mars, Crüe guitarist) will die when he reads this, but it was me, Nikki (Sixx), Vince (Neil) and Tommy (Lee) who were discussing it. They weren't sure whether they wanted to keep the band a four-piece or add another guitarist. Anyway, they finally got around to telling Mick and he said: 'no, no other guitarist'. He was the one who found the group's first backer (Coffman), and he said he'd quit if I joined and take the money with him. After that the talks just stopped!"

Looking back on things, though, Jake's pleased his involvement with "Pansy Metal" didn't go any farther. It's true, the Mötleys attract a lot of girls to their shows, but his eyesight (or rather lack of it) means he's largely oblivious to the winks and gestures of front row females anyway. Speaking of which...

"I'm a sex god – women realise that" – Don Costa.

A CONNOISSEUR of all things carnal, a muscular monument to 'mannishness' and a hero to Halfin, our own lustful Lothario, Don Costa's private, and sometimes not so private antics, make the *Karma Sutra* read like Enid Blyton's memoirs...

Since that dark, primeval age when man the hunter first walked the earth, he's slowly built up a culture, a code of civilised convention that today sets him apart from, and above, all other creatures. The advancement has been huge, though, by virtue of some giant genetic cock-up, Don the hunter seems to have been left behind, the urges/instincts that guided our ancestors still pulsing deep within his loins.

Not surprisingly, he doesn't subscribe to the Sacha Diestel school of phoney latin accents and candle-lit seduction. As far as he's concerned, the sweet nothings and the dinners for two, the accepted social morés that lead step by step to the mating ritual, are just a waste of valuable touch-up time. He puts his faith in a more direct approach, having his own selected phrases that he claims can work wonders for any guy.

These, needless to say, are pertinent to the point of perversity, reflecting the spray – can philosophy of his day-to-day conversation. It's almost as if he's spent his formative years reading toilet walls – in

continues page 20

Jake E. Lee



addition to the 'Playboys', 'Penthouses' and 'Rustlers' that form the bulk of his browsing matter.

Pursuit of the female form naturally occupies most of his waking hours, but now and again he'll find the odd spare moment to listen to a Soft Cell album or head off towards the golf course (though when he talks of '18 holes' before lunch, this has nothing to do with sport in the conventional sense). Other interests include home recording (he likes to tape himself 'in action') and photography (he likes to snap himself, too); bizarre procedures certainly, but tell him he's pulling looney toons and he'll simply agree with you, in a rational, seasoned voice that belies the roughness of his tongue.

If Paul Stanley's got a 'love gun', then he's equipped with a round-the-clock bazooka that never fails to hit home. And he doesn't squander the shells...

"Usually I charge, depending on how ugly she is. If she's really ugly about 100-150 bucks a throw, but if she's cute I'll let her give me a blow-job for 10 bucks."

Nor does he mask his talent...

"I pick out a few girls when I'm onstage at night and give 'em a little cock-nudge. It seems to make 'em giggle, go a bit red and start playing with their crotches. One chick the other night took off her top then pulled up her skirt, she was just going crazy."

For Don, however, this is all part and parcel of a night's work. Here, after all, is a man who goes on wild, 'leg-over' binges with Tommy from the Crüe ("When we get together no hole is safe!"), a man who's never had to find an apartment in LA due to the large number of women willing to take him under their wing.

"I love chicks," he growls, "I love to be with them more than anything. I've got quite a little harem at Huntington Beach, little 16-year old nymphettes. When I visit them, I call it frolic time."

But what about playing?

"Oh, yeah, I like to play too!"

Well, that's alright then... having stolen a bass and spent hours alone in his room with rubber bands wrapped tight around his fingers, getting the feel of the instrument, he first threw in his lot with a few local bands then moved on to LA where he quickly joined up with Dante Fox - Great White, as they're now known.

"I don't call that a band, I call that crap, gay noise!" is how Don describes the outfit today, but at least his time in the ranks gave him the chance to develop

his grosser onstage exploits...

"It was my show, I went absolutely crazy. I was doing things with a pick-axe and I used to punch out my speaker cabinets, break knuckles and draw blood. Then I got a cheese grater and taped it onto the back of my bass, and at a certain point in the set I'd flip it over and just shred my hands to bits. The blood came out a lot faster this way, it gushed all over the place, and people knew it was for real because they could see the chunks of flesh hanging off. It looked really nice."

It must have hurt, though...

"Well, it was fun pain, I liked it. I'd stick my shredded knuckles out and chicks would start licking on 'em - you'll be surprised what little girls will lick!"

Clearly, Don (if you'll excuse the pun) stood out like a sore thumb, so it was no real surprise when, at the end of August '82, he left D Fox to team up with LA's prime debauchees, Wasp. It seemed like a perfect match, the meeting of the mindless, but in fact the alliance held firm for one gig only, after which Costa, finding his naturally warped personality constrained even by this carnivorous crew, quit to front his own band, Damien.

With hired hands on guitar and drums, this was very much a solo project - he was singing,

playing bass and writing the material, effortlessly producing drop-dead ditties like 'Infected Growth', 'Twelve And Under', 'Sweaty Hole' and 'Shredded Meat', an instrumental showcasing the infamous 'grater'.

"It was heavy, raw, terrible music. I have an awful voice, I just belch as loud as I can. One song was called 'Hatred'... 'Hate thy neighbour, shoot him in the head, f**k his wife, steal his bread, HATRED!'"

Using no frills or FX, Don, wrapped in 75 pounds of chain, planned to carry the show on the strength of his own grossness, perhaps introducing a couple of like-minded female acquaintances, not to mention the odd animal...

"I've got a real love/hate thing with rabbits, I was going to slice open some live ones onstage... BIG, FAT BUNNY RABBITS!"

The band's first appearance was to be at the Woodstock, a club in Anaheim, but, just a week before the grand unveiling, Don secured his current post with Ozzy and Damien had to be shelved.

"It was hard to leave," he recalls, "I wouldn't have given up the band for any other gig. This one I jumped at, though, because I've always liked Ozzy... but I miss my cheese grater."



Indeed, in terms of showmanship and excess, Don's playing well within himself at the moment, champing at the bit quite literally during 'Believer', where his molars crunch down hard on the chain about his neck. He may not have the technical suss of Rudy Sarzo, but he generates a louder, punchier sound, holding the bass very low (at crotch level, naturally) and plucking roughly hewn chords with well-travelled digits. "Picks," he maintains, "are for the nose."

In fact, it might not be a bad idea for him to dig out his trusty old warhorse, complete with cheese grater, pick-axe wounds and varnished-on blood, and take a solo spot somewhere in the show. At least it would add a touch of variety to a set now crying out for fresh material...

BY ALL ACCOUNTS, the title track of the next studio album, 'Bark At The Moon', is almost done and Ozzy has the lyrics worked out for a number called 'Rock 'N' Roll Rebel', but beyond this new compositions exist in skeleton form only. Things may be more settled now (it seems), but upheaval within the band over the past few months has clearly made the writing chore a difficult one and caused the Ozz to fall back on a collection of songs he's as bored with as anyone.

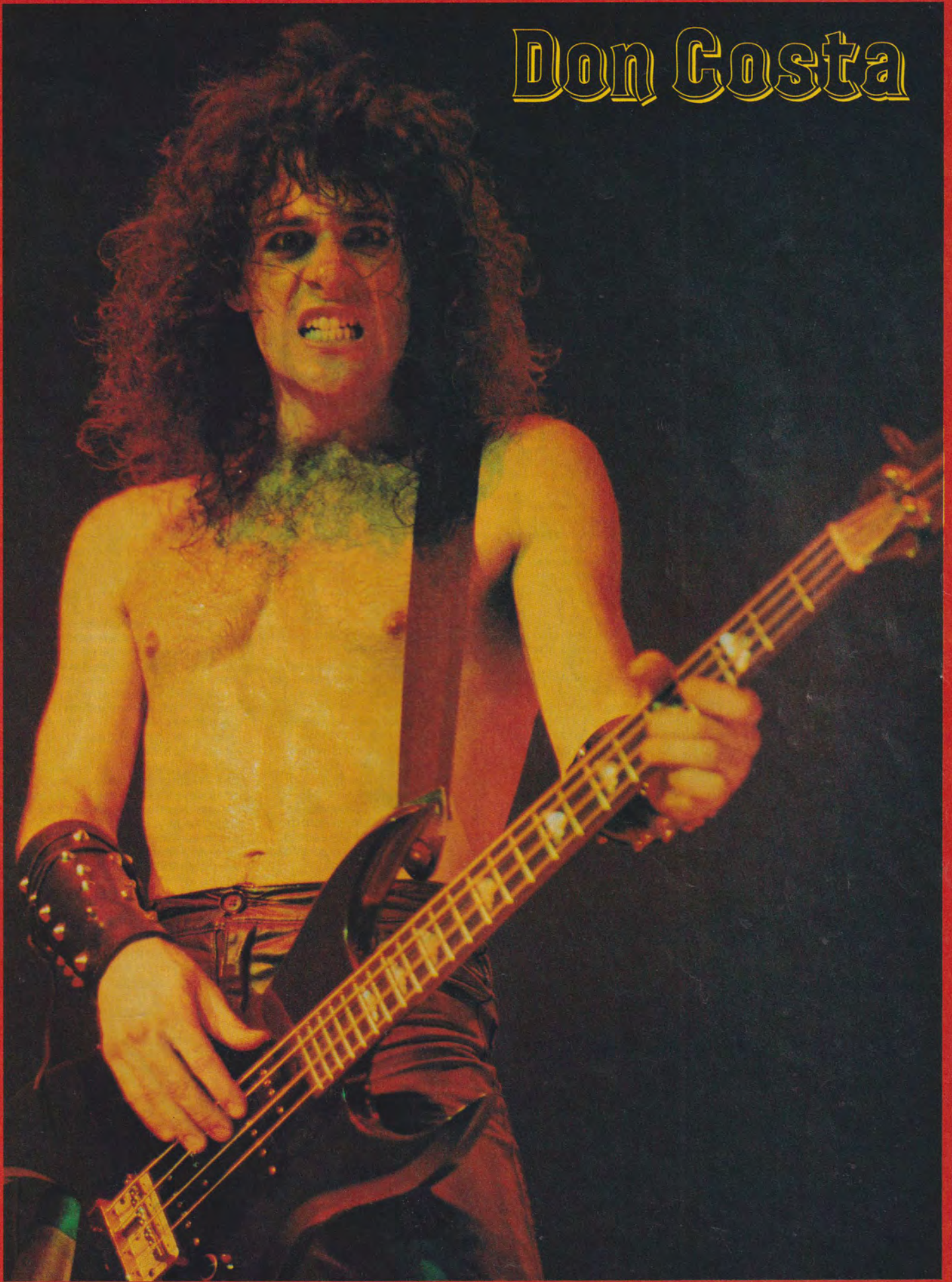
Boredom... until recently he would have relieved it the easy way i.e. got drunk. Very drunk. Certainly, this was his chosen antidote to life when I caught up with him last year in Honolulu. Flying high on all manner of exotic brews and hurling insults wherever there were ears to hear them, coaxing sense from him proved an impossible, though not unenjoyable, task. 'Went to Hawaii - got pissed'. It was a standard entry in the madman's diary.

Thus, when word came recently from the States that Ozzy had collapsed with a heart attack, I can't imagine that too many eyebrows were raised. Surely, this was to be expected, the inevitable consequence of habitual excess...

Not so. His horizontal condition was in fact caused by a combustible mix of medication, with the various potions clashing, ironically enough, just when his view of the world wasn't being obscured by the bottom of a glass.

"I don't want to be the next rock 'n' roll death" - Ozzy Osbourne.

Don Costa



VIVA SHIVA

FACT: I've yet to find someone (critic/muso/fan) whose got a truly **NEGATIVE** thing to say about Shiva. No-one actually loves the band, but everyone is impressed by their potential.

FACT: It takes a good band, a damn good band, to tempt me to spend a day in boring Bristol (no slight intended against natives of this off-colour city, but...)

OPINION: Shiva are a good band, a damn good band!

Now, there was a time when words such as 'potential' and 'good' carried real weight in rock circles. However, over-use has certainly blunted their impact in recent times, reducing them to the level of gibberish, scarcely able to point you in the right journalistic direction, let alone provide the 'code-breaker' to a band's *raison d'être*.

In Shiva's case, as in all others these days, one must look beyond the superlatives to gain insight into their fabric of existence. And, surprisingly, the key to this band's inner soul lies in their very name - SHIVA.

"Shiva is a Hindu god," explained guitarist/vocalist/keyboardsman John Hall, when photographer Ray Palmer and myself encountered the band in their Bristolian flat HQ. "Not that we are into Eastern culture. It just seemed a good name to use. I saw an interview with John Wetton of Asia not long ago, where he was saying that the band chose to call themselves 'Asia' because, although it had no musical connection with what they were doing, it was the sort of name they could build a strong concept around. The same is true with Shiva. For instance, a painting of the god appears on the cover of our 'Fire Dance' album, and we've plans to use 'him' in our live shows."

So, how does this monicker lead to a better understanding of the band? Patience is a virtue, my friends. Before I reveal all, let's just flit through the biographical formalities. Hall, Andy Skuse (bass/vocals/keyboards), and Chris Logan (drums/percussion) have been together since November of 1981, the band having existed in one form or another since September of the previous year.

During the past 15 months,

they've released two singles ('Rock Lives On' and 'Angel Of Mons') plus the strong 'Fire Dance' set, all on the Heavy Metal Records label. They've also appeared on that company's two 'HM Heroes' compilation efforts, and built up a steady grassroots following on the gig circuit, where they recently played support to MSG.

Now, to delve more deeply into their superficial history would take up valuable space; better to talk about what motivates the trio, because, believe me, this latter is far more interesting than hearing clatrap clichés like: "we're a really popular band in Skegness" or "Ernie Tomkins, whose a second cousin of Iron Maiden's original drum roadie, once played the flute for us."

So, to continue where we left off a couple of paragraphs ago, what is revealing about the Shiva handle? It shows this is very much a thinking man's act, something borne out both on vinyl and on stage. Indeed, the mega-unit that most often springs to mind when one talks about Shiva is 'Farewell To Kings'-period Rush, although Skuse, for one believes any similarities between the two bands to be nothing more than coincidence.

"We're certainly not trying to copy Rush. I guess being a trio and using high-pitched vocals does make people link us and them, but there's nothing in it. Not that we object to the comparison. Everyone at our level is compared to someone and, as we all admire Rush, we're quite happy to be associated with them."

"But, we three each have our

own influences, and as a group I can't say we're particularly drawn in any one obvious direction. Shiva's sound is the result of these separate inputs coming together, and we're always striving to be different to any other band. In fact, we've been known to reject good songs because they come over sounding too much like someone else."

To be frank, having listened closely to 'Fire Dance', I tend to think that Shiva arrived at their Rush-esque style as a result of the same process by which Lee, Lifeson, and Peart got onto that path, rather than by copying the end result. You see, with the Canadian maestros, it was, I'm sure, a case of three highly individual, strongly independent musicians searching for common points of contact that led to the sound we call 'late seventies Rush' being forged in a coherent manner. Shiva have naturally repeated the process, and for the moment at least have arrived at the same musical conclusions.

What they've done is make use of their 'common cross-over points' and undoubted talents, to **ACCENTUATE** these to fullest effect. It's rather like a soccer team finding the tactics which best suit the available players, rather than vice versa. Unfortunately, too few rock bands these days take such an attitude. A far greater proportion take a look at what's successful, then attempt to copy it, whether or not it fits their abilities.

In fact, Shiva's approach, (rather like that of Rush!) has more in common with the early seventies heavy/prog rock outfits than their contemporary

early eighties HM bands. And this is clearly underlined by their lyrical content. Songs such as the vehemently anti-war 'Angel Of Mons', the sci-fi orientated 'En Cachent (In Hiding)', and the mystical habitations of 'Stranger Lands', bristle with articulate phrasing, showing that both Hall and Skuse (the men responsible for the verbiage) are well-read people, who delve deeply into the psyche of human business.

Therefore, it would seem logical that, despite Skuse's conviction of Shiva being beyond categorisation ("we can't be pigeon-holed. Our following is so across-the-board. For example, we did a gig in Bridgewater recently with three punk bands, in front of some 200 skins and punks - and they went crazy for us!"), this band, although possessing a sense of fun, have a lot in common with the attitudes of the dreaded New Era of Brit Prog Rock, a fact enhanced by the following Skuse statement:

"We aren't interested at all in developing an image. People keep telling us 'you've gotta have an image'. But something like that isn't us. All we wanna do is go out and play music, and if people can get off that - then great. I don't wanna sound like I'm knocking them, but groups like Wrathchild spend so much time developing a strong visual image that their music suffers enormously. We couldn't go on-stage waving axes, and thrashing whips. It doesn't fit in with our approach. To Shiva, the music is all."

Yet, as up until now, Shiva haven't been lumbered with the media 'prog rock' tag, they've a great advantage over other groups in this musical area. Because **WHEN** (not if) this wholly artificial movement collapses many bands are gonna die with it. This will leave a lot of fans, with an awakened thirst for intelligent rock music, desperately searching the scene for worthy bands to latch onto.

Shiva, having been allowed to slowly mature at their own pace without undue 'fashion' hindrance, will be in a good position to capture this audience - and hold it for years to come.

MALCOLM DOME

SHIVA (L TO R) JOHN HALL, ANDY SKUSE, CHRIS LOGAN



Pic Ray Palmer

TOUR DATES

MOTORHEAD begin their first tour next month with Brian Robertson filling the axe-spot vacated by Eddie Clarke last year. There will be a new album on Bronze to coincide with the tour which will also see the band playing dates in Europe, America, Australia and the Far East.

The ports of call are: Chippenham Gold Diggers May 27, St. Albans City Hall 28, Oxford Apollo 29, Poole Arts Centre 30, Portsmouth Guildhall 31, Norwich East Anglia University June 2, Ipswich Gaumont 3, London Hammersmith Odeon 4 & 5, Derby Assembly Rooms 7, Sheffield University 8 & 9, Manchester Apollo 10, Liverpool Royal Court 13, Preston Guildhall 14, Dundee Caird Hall 15, Aberdeen Capitol 16, Glasgow Apollo 18, Edinburgh Playhouse 19, Newcastle City Hall 20, Leeds University 24 & 25, Birmingham Odeon 26, Cardiff St. David's Hall 28, Bristol Colston Hall 29, Leicester De Montfort Hall 30, West Runtun Pavilion July 1.

Tickets are now on sale from Box Offices and selected ticket outlets.

RUSH have added an extra date at Wembley Arena on May 21 to fulfil the demand for tickets.

FRANK MARINO will be storming the gates of the London Hammersmith Odeon on April 29 and Birmingham Odeon 30. No other dates or info are as yet available, but we'll keep you posted.

SPIDER will be creepy-crawling around the country after returning from Europe where they fulfilled some of the dates that UFO were forced to cancel. The band will be stopping off for the occasional cuppa at: Aberdeen Fusion May 1, Inverness Ice Rink 2, Glasgow Night Moves 3, Edinburgh Nite Club 5, Hull City Hall 6, Grimsby Central Hall 7, Manchester Metro 8, Sheffield Limit 10, Liverpool Warehouse 11, Bradford Caesars 12, London Lyceum 18, Swansea Pavilion 19, Leeds Queens Hall 28. More dates are to follow and at the end of the tour the band will be headlining some gigs in Poland where they played support on the UFO tour.

WRATHCHILD continue to strut their stack heels around the country. Latest ports of call are: Hanley Victoria Hall April 21 (supporting Fastway), Northampton The Old Five Bells 24, Watford Verulam Arms 28, Wigan Tiffany's 29, London Fulham Greyhound May 4, Colwyn Bay Dixieland Pier 5, Redditch Valley Club 6, Birmingham Grapes 12, Coventry Lanchester Poly 18, Preston Clouds 19, Stafford

College of Further Education 20, Stockport Brookfields 21. **TOKYO** will be laying waste the following venues on their 'Powercuts' tour: Helensburgh Drumfark Club April 27, Glasgow Burns Howff 30, Dalry Dalry Inn May 1, Faslane Trident Club 2, Benbeculla Balivanich Gym 6, Skye Crown Hotel 7, Skye Portree 9, Stornaway Caberfey Hotel 10, Stornaway TA Drill Hall 11, Ullapool Farisles Hotel 13/14, Elgin Pingrove Hotel 15, Inverness Muirton Hotel 16, Falkirk Burns Bar 18, Rothsay Royal Hotel 19 & 20, Tillicoultry Ochill Hills 23, Campbeltown Victoria Halls 23, Belshill Septembers 24, Glasgow Burns Howff 25, Greenock Victorian Carriage 26, Arran Whiting Bay 27, Arran Lamash 28.

EXCALIBUR play the following venues: Bradford Idle YMCA April 22, Bradford Nab Wood Youth Centre 29, Bradford Wheatheaf May 4.

PENDRAGON will be touring north of the border with dates at Grangemouth New Imperial Rock Club 22, Leven Golf Tavern & Wishaw Heathery Bar both on 23, Bathgate Kaim Park Hotel 24, Broxburn Astor Club 25, Cardiff University 30, Gloucester Barge Semington May 4, Worcester Waterside Club 5.

AIRBRIDGE will be gigging at Great Yarmouth Big Apple April 21, London Marquee May 15.

DUMPY'S RUSTY NUTS play Sydenham Saxon Tavern April 30, Braintree Essex Barn May 5, Tunbridge Wells Assembly Hall 13, Lee Green Old Tigers Head 19.

THE LARRY MILLER BAND will be promoting their 'Right Chaos' album at London Marquee May 4, London Kensington Ad Lib 7, London Hammersmith Clarendon 21, Guildford Wooden Bridge June 2, Oxford Penny Farthing 3.

SOLSTICE play London Marquee April 22 and Hastings Rumours 23.

IQ play Southampton Compton Arms May 1.

TRUX, HM rockers from Cambridge, play St. Ives Manchester Arms May 6.

SHELL SHOCK gig at Worcester Waterside Club June 2.

THE TONY McPHEE BAND have a series of dates lined up through April and May. They are: Guildford Wooden Bridge April 21, London Putney Half Moon 24, Manchester Band On the Wall 26, Dudley JB's Club 30, London Putney Half Moon May 6, London Greenwich The Mitre 13, London Fulham Kings Head 14.

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THE ICY MIST enveloped him like a clammy shroud. Nailed to the floor, at the centre of a hastily-hewn pentagram, 'The Journalist' no longer felt pain or anguish – only numbness, as his very soul seemed to be clawing its way to the surface. "Let me outta here!", it pleaded, as 'The Journalist' stared with a sense of ever-creeping, poisonous foreboding at the five be-cowled figures, encircling him in the flickering murk of the failing candlelight.

Oh, why had he not harkened unto the words of Bishop Bonutto and his heart-felt pleas to stay away from these latter-day disciples of the black magic box? Why had he blundered ever onwards in his search for sensationalist copy? But, 'twas too late now for second thoughts or repenting on past sins – he was trapped in the nether-nether world of 1001 Alice Cooper videos from whence there was to be no escape.

As he lay, caked in his own blood, 'The Journalist' noticed a sixth shadowy fiend had taken sudden, solid shape as if through the constant incantations of 'Lucifer, Lucifer' that had emanated like a fountain of fear from the hooded, mysterious quintet. 'The Journalist' felt his sagging heart skip several beats as he recognised the eerie spectre from the babbled descriptions he'd heard from half-crazed unfortunates privy to the inner sanctum of the defrocked Cardinal of Ozz.

Grimacing with a maniacal glint from horn to horn, the fury hovered over him, screaming out in an ancient language of lost souls, seven words to send a sliver of fear through the skulls of even the most valiant of men ... "ARE YOU READY TO ROCK & ROLL?!"

The scene melted like a myriad faces under the influence of 'The Devil's Rain'. The terrifying chant of 'Lucifer...' gave way to a bounding, Guinness-sodden Irish brogue imploring five patiently hidden musicians to put more action into their poses. 'The Journalist' blinked. Gone was the blackened room, the blood-rimmed walls, and the aura of evil ... or was it!??

Yea, infidels, the BBC (Babbling Beelzebub Corporation) proudly presents, all the way from Denmark – The Exploding Nun Ensemble, alias Mercyful Fate.

HAVING championed the cause of these Danish decibelic demons from afar, I must say meeting 'em in the flesh as it were during their recent visit to lens-mate Fin Costello's Central London photographic studio (part of their flying trip to Britain), brought a warm glow to the cockles of my staked-out heart.

For, this is no disappointing bunch of pseudo-black metallurgists in the Demon mouldy mould (nice guys, if you like showroom dummies). Oh no, King Diamond/Timi Grabber/Michael Denner/Hank Sherman/Kim Ruzz are definitely vein-glorious sick-o-phantics, ready an' scheming to follow Venom over the threshold and into the abyss. Or at least vocal sprite Diamond most certainly is!

"I'm not a member of a Satan coven. But I do pray a little to 'him' back in Denmark. I've got a black altar in my home, with two black candles always burning. In the middle of it is a human skull, and a gold, inverted cross.

"I got into Satanism because of the strange experiences I had when I was younger. A lot of things happened that I can't really describe now.

continues over

Pic Fin Costello





One important event that got me into this was a dream I had a few years ago. It was rather nasty, actually. I dreamt I saw a big, black book with a picture of a strange lady on the back. As I looked, she suddenly came to life! I tried screaming for help to my brother who shared a bedroom with me. But, no sound came out! The mysterious lady beckoned me to follow her, and I felt compelled to do so. I then found myself in the centre of a coven of 13 hooded, shadowy figures, all of whom were pointing at me, saying 'you're living on borrowed time'. I woke up in a real sweat, I can tell you. It was a truly horrifying nightmare. After that, I began to investigate more deeply into the mystical side of life.

"Some of the things that have occurred to me since have been weird, I can tell you. For instance, on one occasion I was sitting around at home with a couple of guys from the band, when all of a sudden a glass on the table leapt in the air, coming down unbroken with a thud. I thought I was going crazy, and didn't breathe a word to the other guys. I was convinced it was an hallucination. But, they looked at me as if to say 'did you see that?'"

However, frightening these events might seem, they are as nought compared to the time some 18 months ago when Fate supported Girlschool in Copenhagen. It was on the night (long ago reported in *Kerrang*) when Kim McAuliffe was electrocuted on-stage, coming within a fine whisker of death. Let Diamond take up the story.

"We'd done our set, with me using the same microphone that was later to give Kim such a shock. At one point, I'd said something like 'we're gonna bring Satan into this house tonight'. Anyway, we did our stint, and went back to the dressing room. But, when Girlschool started to play, I could distinctly hear some strange noises coming from the PA. I've still got a tape of it at home - it was very strange.

"One of our roadies came in to tell us about the noises, and for some reason I still don't understand, I turned to him and said 'I know, and the band will have to stop playing in a few minutes. AND THEY WON'T PLAY ANOTHER NOTE TONIGHT!' Just why that came into my head, I can't explain. A few minutes later, Kim was electrocuted.

"What was even crazier was that the police called in some expert electricians to go over all the gear - and they could find NOTHING wrong. The promoter of the gig actually went on the radio and said that he'd felt a very strange atmosphere surrounding the hall on the night in question, the like of which he'd never before come across. He told the DJ it was almost as if something had to happen, because it had been decreed by forces beyond human comprehension!"



AAAARGGHHH! It's enough to make even the most cynical of doubting Thomas's think twice before going near la Fates. However, not everything in the Satanic garden comes up smelling in such a sinister fashion. Believe it or not, there is a

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'fun' side to the band (and Diamond's) Luciferic interest - fun that is, if you happen to have Gomez and Morticia Addams (of 'Addams Family' fame) for parents!

"We really wanna get people into a certain mood at our gigs, rather than just nodding their heads to the music. On-stage I always wear the same type of make-up - because it represents 'DEATH' and makes me feel rather maniacal. We also use quite a few props. One of my favourite 'tricks' was a thing the band did in Eindhoven once. One of our roadies gave us a small volume of his own blood, which I put into a glass vial. We had two crossed goose feathers on our altar that night, and were gonna perform a Satanic ritual whereby human blood is sprinkled on the feathers - and they come to life.

"When we did it, I smashed the vial onto the altar, and then smeared my face in the blood. The fans obviously thought it was theatrical



blood, and reached out to touch my hands. It was only then that they realised this was REAL blood, and some of them turned visibly ill! Unfortunately, we had to drop this part of the act, 'cos although it had a great effect on the kids in the first two rows, anyone further back in the hall wasn't aware of anything happenign.

"When I was in my previous band, Black Rose, I used to split open a pig's head before we went on-stage, and then fill up a doll with the entrails and blood. Once the gig had started I would ritually sacrifice this doll in a Satanic manner, again smearing myself in blood, and throwing the guts in the audience. It got a reaction from them if nothing else!"

Ooo, yeah, pass the sick-bag Alice. And, of course, I ain't mentioned the fact that Mercyful Fate's intro tape happens to be one of the most unnerving/chaotic I've ever clapped ear-muffs on. You know what it is? An extract from one of the Alan Parsons Project's classically wimpoid albums - played backwards (yep, even bland quiche-lovers have their uses). The reason for this strange choice is because King Diamond is one of those to have played 'Stairway To Heaven' in reverse, has convinced himself of a hidden Satanic message, and now plays everything backwards - just in case!



BUT, I hear you scream, what about those fabled exploding nuns? According to Diamond, they aren't quite 'exploding', more "well, they sort of smoke a bit, rather than actually blowing up (b-o-r-i-n-g). We've used a live 'nun' in the past. It was in Denmark. We stripped her on-stage, and did naughty things to her. But we don't make a habit (aaaaarrrrggghh) of the latter, because there aren't that many women prepared to go through such a ritual, as you can understand!"

Well, I don't think you'd disagree Mercyful Fate definitely don't pull any Satanic punches. In fact they're true blood-bruvvers of the near-legendary Geordie sprats Venom. Or are they?

"I don't like Venom at all," spits Diamond. "They play at Satanism. It's an image to them and one that's not taken at all seriously.

"Musically, none of us like what they're into. Just how these guys have managed to sell so many albums is beynd me. Their first album sounded like the three blokes each recorded the first thing that came into his head. No, we don't feel any affinity with Venom whatsoever."

All of which rhetoric could mean that Dutch mud might turn crimson with anger when the two legions of Hell's musos come hoof-to-hoof in June at the Aardshock Festival. Fate open proceedings, Venom are set to close 'em - sounds like a suitable case for getting out the party togs 'down under' (and I'm not talking about Australia!).

Before this happens, though, a new MF LP is due to hit the shops, entitled 'Into The Coven', it will be available sometime in mid-May and features some tremendous new material like 'Curse Of The Pharaohs' (Egyptian metal?), 'Evil' and 'Sound Of The Demon Bells' (the sort of thing Pete Makowski hears at closing time). Recorded during just nine days in Holland, this is certainly a must for all self-respecting closet vampires, ghouls, werewolves, and members of the Official Monster Raving Loony Party.

'What manner of man is this, or what manner of creature is it in the semblance of man? I feel the dread of this horrible place overpowering me; I am in fear - in awful fear - and there is no escape for me; I am encompassed about with terrors that I dare not think of...'
(Extract from 'Dracula' by Bram Stoker).

SINGLES

reviewed by
DEE SNIDER
of **Twisted Sister!**

SO, NOW it's my turn. After all the good and bad reviews that Twisted Sister has received in its lifetime, I'm getting a chance to be on the end that does the dishing out. Well, I've got to warn you that I'm a pretty easy mark. I know how much time, effort, blood, sweat, tears (to quote a famous person whose name escapes me at the moment), and money goes in to making a record, and what it means to the performer, so, I usually find it hard to criticise other people's work.

It seems to me that music is in the ear of the beholder, but KERRANG! has asked me for MY OPINION so, I'll do the best I can. Personally, I'd rather be reviewing some Marquee Club backstage, hard core, porn video starring Robbi Millar writing reviews with her mouth full. Oh well, here goes ...

BLACK MAGIC: 'Spellbound' (Visual Vinyl)

'Crossfire' – This is a fairly typical, mediocre attempt at a Pat Benatar imitation. The main problem seems to be that the vocalist really doesn't have much of a voice. I should know, I don't really have much of a voice either, but at least I know what to do with it.

'Take It Easy' – What do you get when you mix the Doobie Bros., Donna Summer, and Blondie together in a blender? A bloody mess! I know disco when I hear it! And what's with the cheap orgasm at the end? Give me a break!

'Stranger I Waited For' – Well, this could have been great. It started out strong, and I actually was enjoying it, then suddenly the chorus arrived with its "Led Zeppelin" acoustic guitar! Where did that come from? What started as molten metal, turned into purified pabulum!

At least it can't be said that this lot are trying to push the "female sex object" side of the band. I mean, just because this record is a picture disc, with photographs of its female vocalist in a revealing leather, "S&M" outfit on one side and what appears to be the discarded remains of a car polishing chamois tied to said vocalists torso on the other side, doesn't mean they're pushing sex. Does it?

LEE AARON PROJECT: (Visual Vinyl)

Now this is more like it! Sure she's selling "it" too, but at least she has the voice to back it up.

Lee Aaron is a real heavy, female vocalist who is definitely a contender in the Pat Benatar imitation competition, but I think



DEE SNIDER presents the SMF (T) Horny Rose Award to Lee Aaron

that she just might beat Patricia at her own game.

'I Like My Rock Hard' – Great track! My only criticism would be that I would have liked to see more done with the chorus (i.e. group chanting). If you use this suggestion I want an arrangement credit.

'Under Your Spell' – Another great track! Commercial yet heavy and a nice vocal styling change by L.A. It could be a hit.

'Lonely For Your Love' – Yet another great track! Nice guitar work by Rick Santer, not to mention the tunesmithing.

'I Just Wanna Make Love To You' – Great remake!

Did you ever notice that when the record is good the reviewers hardly write anything, but when the record is bad they've got pages? That's why critics hate everything; if they didn't they'd be out of a job! Anyway, back to the Lee Aaron Project.

Great playing, great singing, great songs, not to mention great production. Watch for more of this lady. Didn't somebody say that about us six years ago?

STEVE MILLER: 'Take the Money and Run' (live) (Mercury)

At last I have my revenge! I am definitely not the best choice for reviewing this man's (?) single. I hate him. (Well at least I'm honest) From the first time I heard 'Keep On Rockin' Me Baby', which was a total ripoff of Free's 'Alright Now' (with Paul Kossoff not even cold in his grave), I have hated him with a passion fuelled by his repeated song ripoffs for which he has made millions of dollars! To be honest this is the first time I've even heard the whole song through! Whenever it came on the radio I would turn it off! I say smash this record on general principles!

SUPREME WARRIOR – 'Treading the Tight Rope' (Supreme Warrior)

Now, either the guitars on this track are out of tune or the guitarist is playing such intense, amazing, avant-garde, jazz chords that my feeble brain cannot comprehend the vastness of the structuring.

I can handle people playing out

of tune in a live situation (we often do) because sometimes there is nothing you can do under those circumstances, but playing out of tune in the studio is unacceptable.

I even bought new batteries for my cassette player just in case the batteries I had in it might have been going dead; it didn't make any difference. Because of this situation I was not able to judge the song, only the group. I think it might have been a good song, had it been in tune. This is a new band from Essex, by the way.

LOUDNESS (or is that "Roudness") (just kidding) 'Geraldine' (B and M Japanese import)

This must be a great band because, the copy I received was warped and in spite of that I still thought the record was excellent. Good playing and good singing. I've never heard the original (this is a 60's remake), but this version will do just fine. I wonder if these guys have ever heard of Van Halen?

GARBO: 'The Dancing Strange' (Rarn)

There is a really heavy, early 70's Bowie / Sweet / Roxy influence on this record. Right down to the production. It's not bad, if you're into that kind of thing, although I wish the chorus was a bit stronger. (Bowie would be proud of these lyrics. What do they mean?)

NIGHT RANGER: 'Don't Tell Me You Love Me' (Epic)

It's a long way from Rubicon, boys! This isn't Ozzy Osbourne, but it isn't Toto either; it's right in between. Powerful enough for the heavys and catchy enough for the straights. If you were expecting Ozzy Osbourne II you're not going to find it, but Brad hasn't lost his forcefulness. His lead work is brilliant. I think we'll be hearing more from this band.

MICHAEL JACKSON: – 'Beat It' (Epic)

I've never been one for chameleons, especially ones who can't make up their minds. This prime example of New/Disco/Metal is a carefully designed song which attempts to have something for everybody. Well, you can fool all of the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but you can't fool a heavy metal kid!

This song is basically well written, played, sung, and produced, but it reeks of insincerity and patronization (not to mention money).

SO YOUNG, SO BAD!

Howard Johnson gets Starz in his eyes

CAPITOL RECORDING artistes Starz. Born on Labour Day Weekend 1975, there was a huge amount of potential which never reached fruition in this New Jersey five-piece. All went according to plan in the early days. A management contract with Bill Aucoin was signed, the band recorded demos with Jack Douglas, went on the road with ZZ Top, Styx and the Outlaws and signed to Capitol with nary a problem.

The retrospective of a class band begins here with:

'Starz' (EA-ST11539)

Released in June 1976, Starz was the album that launched a thousand hypes. The band, with a stable line-up of Richie Ranno (guitar), Michael Lee Smith (vocals), Pete Sweval (bass), Brenden Harkin (guitar) and Joe X. Dubé (drums), was certainly given plenty of push by an enthusiastic Capitol Records while Bill Aucoin, having taken the group to his

benevolent bosom, was bustin his ass for their (and his) benefit.

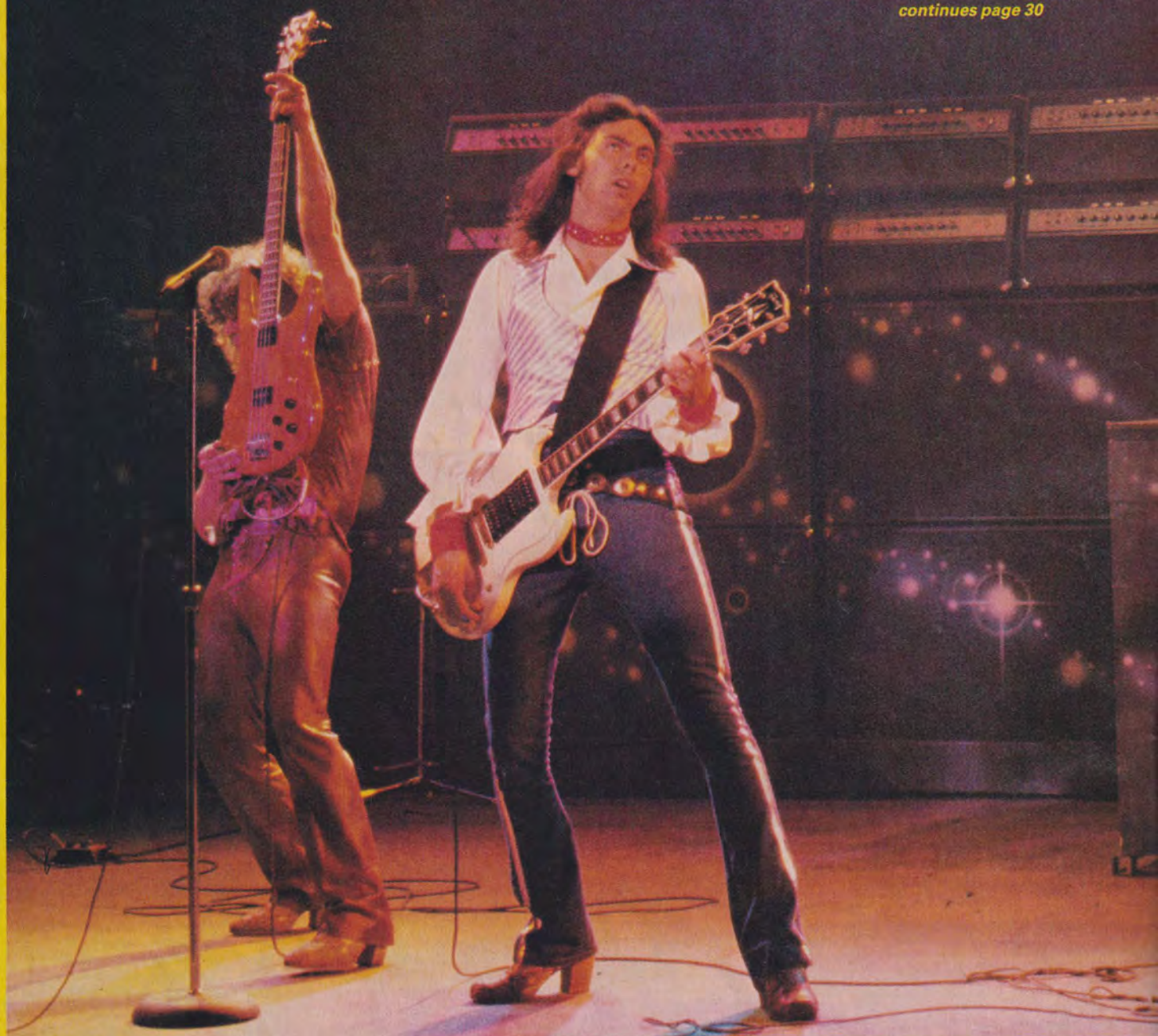
It was generally seen that Starz would be the next big money-spinners for the EMI conglomerate but everyone, understandably, reckoned without the punk explosion of '76, a factor that made the Starz struggle in Britain that much harder and eventually fruitless. No amount of free singles, such as the version of 'Boys In Action' coupled with two or three minutes of Starz rhetoric

on the flip given away in *Sounds*, nor the free Starz poster mailed out to anyone and everyone by Capitol, could alter the course of music in the UK.

The power-chord was now to be performed *au naturel* – in the raw and badly! A talented, long-haired bunch of New Yorkers pretentiously named Starz (note the 'z') was a definite no go situation in this country from the off. Now had this been '79...

Sounds Geoff Barton,

continues page 30







virtually the only critic still upholding the cause of class rock bands, was disappointed with the product displayed on 'Starz'. Perhaps his expectations had been raised too high by the hype or by the hope that the band could match his new heroes of the time, the incomparable Kiss. I wonder if he would be as harsh on the album today?

Kicking off with 'Detroit Girls', Starz immediately laid all their cards on the table. These boys were full-blooded US males with a distinct liking for, no, make that need for, women! The feminists could go sit on it (their faces probably!) And the music?

'Detroit Girls' sets off in much the same vein as many numbers from the first three Kiss albums. A steady riff with an escalating, tight guitar solo builds into the vocal, Smith immediately displaying his class by handling the slightly seedy subject matter in an appropriately lecherous manner.

A good ploy it was too, to write a paean to Detroit, US home of hard rock and the town that had taken to Kiss first of all. "I'm talkin' to ya Detroit girls ooh, ooh, ooh!" sings Lee Smith, whooping it up in a way that would have made a duet with Paul Stanley an

outstanding proposition, but he was also taking the first opportunity to talk to the world, Would it listen...?

In these hi-tech, mastering, re-mastering, EQing, re-EQing days of '83, Jack Douglas' production does sound a little dated, the instruments don't quite blend together as well as can be heard on most releases today and the sound is really that of a band playing live in the studio, but it's clear that none of the aggression has been produced out!

'Boys In Action' is as raucous an extolment of the wrecked crew philosophy as you'll find anywhere, Ranno and Harkin blasting away with sufficient gay abandon to split your head open and leave you screaming in painful pleasure: "You want action, you say you want action, well that's just what you're gonna get!" Too true!

'(She's Just A) Fallen Angel' follows this particular gross-out spectacular and with its commercial lilt and inspiring slide play, courtesy of (I would guess) Ranno, gives an indication of the Starz ear for a great melody – a trait that would be fully explored later in the band's career.

Overall, 'Starz' is a very satisfying debut of trashy but classy US Metal ('Over And Over' is the classic example).

Judging from the inner sleeve, depicting a girl's rather adorable cleavage covered in a leather jacket displaying a Starz badge made from a coke bottle top, the band wanted nothing more!

'Violation' (Capitol E-ST11617)

'Violation' gave full vent to the animalistic aggression that Starz had unleashed perhaps 90 per cent on their debut (the guitar work on 'Pull The Plug' will show you what I mean!) Certainly, the hardest Starz LP released, spring 1977 will go down as a vintage period in my humble book.

Once more with Douglas at the production helm, the band is every bit as strong musically as one imagined it could be, but the lyrics on display show an increasing maturity and depth of vision. The basic 'love and sex' themes are still catered for through 'Cherry Baby', the album opener and first UK single from the release, though even they are tempered by the nature of the music, a melodic, mid-tempo, less than hard rocker, that still works surprisingly well and is no compromise whatsoever.

More interesting, however, is the title track, where Smith paints a picture of a world in which we've all been

brainwashed into accepting a pretty wretched lot:

"Lousy jobs, down in the holes

*Join the union, learn to bowl,
Lovely houses, of cement
The committee pays the rent"*

Sounds fun, eh? Michael has only one comment, which is quickly quashed:

*"I wanna rock 'n' roll,
No, that's a violation!"*

All this of course, delivered with an absolutely immaculate rock voice – a voice that soars and dips without the slightest effort. The man deserves to be a star. I'm tempted to hail this song as the best on the album, but that would be to neglect the qualities of so many other worthy numbers.

Firstly, there's 'Subway Terror', the opening song on the second side, a quite lethal musical expression concerning muggers on the New York subways. There's no bashfulness here – Harkin and Ranno riff it up to full effect while Smith coldly delivers the lines:

"By God, this blade is razor sharp

Do you know how to play a harp?"

Sick or just totally honest? I dunno, but a stunning song nonetheless.

Highlights abound, from the

exceedingly naughty cool one ("She reached over and squeezed on my rocks . . . the seat's sticky but that's all right by me") is hardly restrained now, is it?), through to the heavy, mid-tempo, haunting, rockist 'S.T.E.A.D.Y.' And we mustn't forget 'Sing It, Shout It', a minor US hit for the band co-written with one Jon Parrot, a member of Richie Ranno's original outfit Bungi, who released two singles, 'Turk's Squeal' and 'Six Days On The Road' in '71 and '72 respectively.

'Is That A Street Light Or The Moon?' is an evocative, acoustic ballad incorporating an orchestra that brings a very complete album to an unwelcome close. With songs as good as this, it's hard to believe that there's actually a need for a Starz retrospective!

The record company, for their part, hadn't forgotten how to hype the band – not that they needed it, mind you! With the release of 'Violation', the company sponsored a Formula 3 racing car in the BP and Vandervell championships. The vehicle, a March 773 Toyota, was driven by New Zealander Brett Riley and bore the distinctive yellow Starz logo on a jet black background. The things people do for publicity!!

'Attention Shoppers' (Capitol ST 11730)

'Attention Shoppers' is generally regarded as the weakest Starz album in circulation and, while I tend to agree with that assessment, there's no way it should be swept under the carpet as a Starz abortion.

What can be stated categorically is that this album does *not* rock with even a tenth of the power displayed on the first two releases. While Jack Douglas didn't perform perfectly on those albums, his production was still far superior to the one turned in here by the band themselves. The sounds are basically wimpish and muffled – definitely restrained! It's sad because the material presented is easily as strong as anything the band had performed up to this time!

Aside from presenting the group personnel as a real bunch of jerks on the album sleeve (whoever heard of a rock singer wearing baggy tartan trousers, unless he's on the golf course?!), the marketing policies employed by Aucoin (yup, the same management as Kiss) and Capitol were lavish yet again. Based on the American shopping ethic, whereby messages are piped over a store's PA system advising people to buy this or that product, 'AS' was unleashed on the public with

exactly the same crass razzmatazz.

The inner sleeve is in the form of a recycled brown paper grocery bag (y'know the sort Jim Rockford never has out of his hands) which contains the message: 'This album has been approved for the recommended daily dosage of rock 'n' roll', and I also own an 'Attention Shoppers' promo device in the form of a newspaper advertising goods on display in the store, the goods being, of course, Starz.

"We just want to provide the background music to the scores of our listeners lives", says Lee Smith, unintentionally pinpointing the problem with 'Attention Shoppers'. Namely, that it's exactly that – background music, when it should have been far more up front and a damn sight more punchy.

The album's songs nod more in the direction of harmony and melody than before, with 'Hold On To The Night' and 'She' merely poking the album into life when they could and should have really kicked. Even rockers such as the distinctly Aerosmithy 'X-Ray Spex' don't bite with any deep-rooted desire to *kill*.

However, special mention must be made of the seven minute plus blues rock epic 'Johnny All alone', a true piece of quality music, with emotion spilling forth from every pore as Ranno and Harkin combine as effectively as ever to engulf your senses and make you scream for more . . . more . . .! Sad it is, that the production again mars a potential classic. The songs needed re-recording and, duly, they were . . .

Starz Live At Municipal Auditorium, Louisville, March 30 1978 (Capitol SPRO 885T/8858)

Although released after the final Starz studio album, 'Coliseum Rock', 'LAMA' marked the last recorded performance of the original line-up – Smith, Ranno, Dubé, Sweval and Harkin.

I say 'released', but that's really something of an overstatement. This live taste of Stardom was never bestowed on the punters for, as Xavier Russell pointed out in *Kerrang!* Issue 33, it was made available to American radio stations only. A travesty certainly, as it presented Starz at their best – raw, steaming and aggressive, yet still possessed of a classy sheen. It's easiest to note the improvement on the 'Attention Shoppers' numbers given an airing here – and that's the majority of material included.

The album features a great cover shot (black and white, unfortunately) by Fin Costello, I

believe, which gives some idea how visually exciting the band must have been, what with dry ice and jets of fire everywhere, but everywhere. Michael Lee Smith cuts the rock Adonis figure with consummate ease, shirt unbuttoned to the navel and long hair flowing in some kinda hard rock parody of Jagger, while the other band members pour on the musical ecstasy.

Ecstasy it is too, from the thunderous opener 'She' right through to the laboriously titled 'Waitin' On You Coliseum Rock/Waitin' On You Finale', a monster 10 minute plus workout that draws the action to a close.

It's just a shame that songs such as 'Detroit Girls' or 'Monkey Business' from the first album aren't given the once over live, but 'Rock Six Times' and 'Subway Terror' rock out in frighteningly strong manner, while 'Johnny All Alone', re-titled 'Austin All Alone' as a dedication to Austin Valli who helped the band in some way or another, is unbelievably forceful, making the studio version sound weak by comparison. A live album to swear by, get hold of a copy by hook or by crook . . . it's 46 minutes 22 seconds of sheer unadulterated joy!

'Coliseum Rock' (Capitol E-ST11861)

Following this crowning glory, Starz parted company with bassist Pete Sweval and guitarist Brenden Harkin. Their places were quickly filled by Bobby Messano on guitar and Orville Davis on bass. Davis had previously played with Michael Lee Smith's brother, Rex, who worked in a Heavy Metal band of the same name, recording two albums, 'Rex' and 'Where Do We Go From Here?', as well as a southern boogie band, Baby.

It didn't take the new recruits long to slip into the Starz set up. The live album was recorded on March 30 1978 and by the summer the band were ensconced in Toronto's Nimbus 9 Studio, under the guidance of Jack (Santer's) Richardson, laying down tracks for the 'Coliseum Rock' album.

"We're really happy about 'Coliseum Rock'. It's a progression on the sound we've always wanted," was Michael Lee Smith's comment at the time and, while there have certainly been better productions, for Starz it was a major breakthrough indeed. The songs were stronger than ever, spanning the full-width of the band's writing abilities, from the ultimate pop rock of 'So Young So Bad' through to the racy Metal of 'Take Me'.

Apart from the fact that the message 'Howard, all is

forgiven' is included on the album sleeve (what did I do? What did I do?) 'Coliseum Rock' is well nigh faultless! Ironic innit that the final number 'Where Will It End?' was answered almost immediately, for Starz called it a day shortly afterwards.

"We were unhappy with the sales of 'Coliseum Rock'," says Ranno, "we felt that Capitol weren't doing what they should've. But maybe we left in haste and should've stayed."

End of Starz story, and a great pity too, for here was a band that in the words of Ranno "Should've been up there with the likes of Judas Priest – and could've been!"

The seven members of Starz are still around, scattered across the States. Richie Ranno and Michael Lee Smith are looking for a new deal with Hellcats, of course, Brenden Harkin played with a band named 'The Keep' before getting more involved in jazz work in a session capacity, Pete Sweval lives in California and played in a disco troupe with Richie Fontana from Piper and Sean Delaney, while Joe X Dubé now attends Rutgers University in New Jersey where he graduates as an architectural landscaper in 1984. Bobby Messano played with Benny Mardones and Tycoon ('Turn Out The Lights' Arista AL9555 USA 1981) and has now joined Franke And The Knockouts who've just completed their third album. The activities of Orville Davis, however, remain shrouded in mystery.

Starz could have been just that, but all we're left with are memories – and hopes for what the band's members may achieve in the future.

Discography

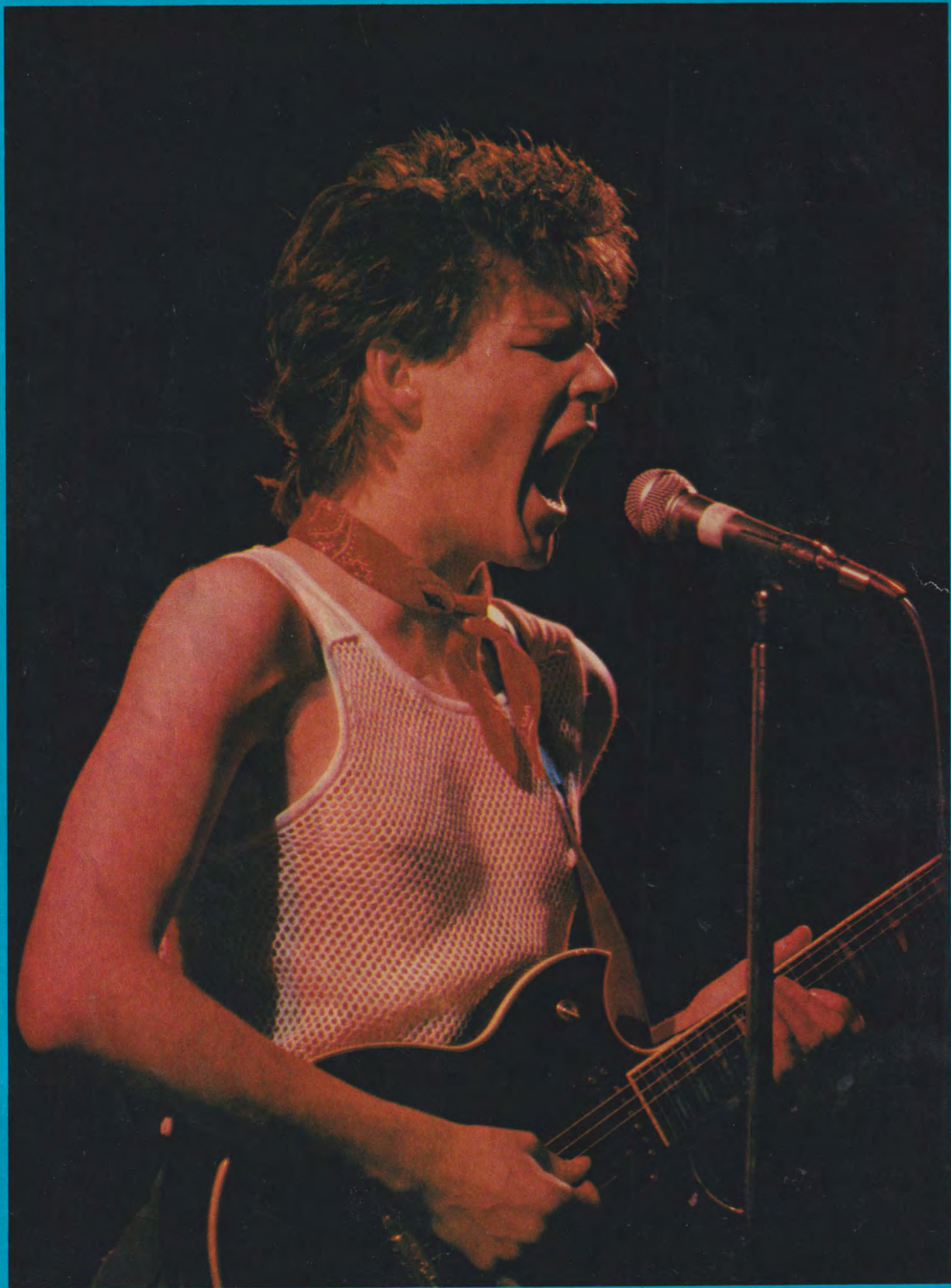
The following info came courtesy of Richie Ranno and thus relates to American chart positions and release dates. Capitol UK have (do you believe this?) thrown their Starz file away so you'll have to guess UK details for yourselves.

'Starz', released June 1976 reached top 70. Single – 'Fallen Angel'. Toured with Aerosmith and Ted Nugent.

'Violation', released April 1977, reached top 70. Singles – 'Cherry Baby', 'Sing It, Shout It'. Toured with Bob Seger and also some headlining dates.

'Attention Shoppers', released January 1978, reached top 70. Singles – '(Anyway That You Want It) I'll Be There', 'Hold On To The Night'. Toured with Foghat and Styx.

'Coliseum Rock' released October 1978, reached top 200. Singles – 'So Young So Bad', 'Last Night I Wrote A Letter'. Toured with Rush and Styx.



MUSIC TO MOVE MOUNTAINS BY!

The heaviest guitar sound around comes from BIG COUNTRY sez Chas De Whalley. But leader STUART ADAMSON (left) ain't flattered . . .

THOSE OF you who do more than simply bury your noses in the latest issue of *Kerrang!* (and your ears in your Rainbow albums) can hardly have missed Big Country. Or their epic single 'Fields Of Fire'. It seems to me like it's been blaring out from radio sets and reeling its way through the hit parade for the last six weeks or more.

And it's been virtually impossible to switch on the telly without seeing Big Country at full throttle on almost everything going from 'The Tube', 'Riverside' and 'Whatever You Want' to 'Tops Of The Pops'!

But just in case you've been lost in space for the last month let me tell you that 'Fields Of Fire' is a whirling dervish of crashing guitars, a maniac Scots jig with a fiercesome six string ring and a hard, headlong beat which has cut a swathe across the charts and scattered drum machines and synthesizers like grapeshot.

Let me add too that Big Country, the band who have done it, are fast limbering up into one of the finest and probably most important twin guitar outfits to hit British rock since Wishbone Ash in the earliest Seventies.

Of course, you've only got to take one look at them to tell they're not your standard *Kerrang!* fodder. You won't find Big Country sporting spandex, studs and King Charles II curls. Razor cuts and lumberjack shirts are more in their line.

But that doesn't mean they can't make it with the mayhem merchandise when they want to. In fact Big Country have quite enough krank-it-up-kredentials to satisfy any real rock fan born with steel strings for hair and machine heads for ears. So where else, pray, should a band like that belong but the in the pages of *Kerrang!*?

Stuart Adamson still isn't convinced, mind you. He has this theory about Heavy Metal and Heavy Metal fans, you see. God knows where he formed it, probably when he was a punk rocker in the late Seventies and his bullwhip guitar-lines lashed The Skids onto 'Top Of The Pops' with New Wave classics like 'Into The Valley' and 'Masquerade'. Or maybe it was just a little later after an earlier line up of Big Country was virtually bottled off Alice Cooper's last British tour. Either way he has this theory and he's sticking to it. For the time being anyway. Until you prove him wrong.

"I think a lot of Heavy Metal fans are simply too narrow-minded. That's good in a sense because it means they're very loyal to the groups they like - probably more than some of those groups deserve - and I wouldn't dream of knocking that. But there should be scope for all sorts of things in music, only the majority of Heavy Metal fans don't seem prepared to listen to anything which is even a little bit different.

So their music has grown too clichéd. A lot of the bands could actually be each other and nobody would know the difference.

"Heavy Metal's become really conservative. It only looks back at the old ideas and never concerns itself with anything new. Everybody forgets that when the original bands like Cream, Sabbath, Deep Purple and Led Zeppelin first appeared they weren't considered Heavy Metal or anything else for that matter. They were simply the newest, most exciting and innovative bands going. But all these new groups nowadays seem to do nothing but rewrite all the old riffs. I think it's very sad."

NOW, BEFORE you consider rearranging Stuart Adamson's face for him, take a deep breath, count to ten, and answer me this: can you honestly put your hand over your heart and swear that there isn't a grain of truth in what he has to say? I mean, when did you last hear a genuine, red-blooded rock band doing something even a little bit new and different?

"I've always said I wanted to do things with the guitar that have never been done before," mused Adamson, calling for yet another lager.

"I almost got there with The Skids only the enjoyment went out of it after our second album 'Days In Europa'. After we split I could have got a singles deal immediately and traded on my success but I felt that would have cheapened what I was trying to do. Now I think Bruce and I have really cracked it. It's not a question of lead and rhythm or first and second guitars. We play off one another and build up sequences and rhythms and orchestrated lines which are an integral part of the songs. We don't play solos either. There's none of that 'Look how well I can play' crap. Who needs that?"

Don't go away with the impression that a Big Country gig is one more avant-garde experience. Privately Stuart Adamson may still harbour a few of the philosophies of punk but that doesn't mean the rest of the band have to agree with him.

There's bikers' blood rushing in their ears. Take Bruce Watson, for example. Under interview he may be swamped by Adamson's verbal flood but privately here's a man with a definite taste for the obnoxious and the 'orrible, whether it be Twisted Sister or the Ramones and Iggy Pop.

And let us not forget either Big Country's rhythm section of Tony Butler (bass) and Mark Brzezicki (drums). Still in their early twenties these two may be, but, long before joining Big Country, when they were in the ill-fated On The Air, their exceptional skills were noted by both Pete Townshend (who used Mark's drumming on almost all of his last solo album 'All The Best Cowboys Have

Chinese Eyes') and The Pretenders who had Butler in to add bass to their excellent 'Back On The Chain Gang' single.

You only have to see Big Country in action to discover what a difference that sort of skill and expertise can make. The Big Country show is, on the surface, an all-action, running, jumping, standing-still extravaganza. And a feast of fierce, flailing guitars. But underneath the wild rover riffs that are as Scots as kilts and sporrans Londoners Butler and Brzezicki have the beat well under control and provide the kind of poise that sorts out the men from the boys.

Not everything is taken at the blistering breakneck pace of 'Fields Of Fire' or its predecessor 'Harvest Home'. Check out the wonder 'A Thousand Stars' and the emotive 'Lost Patrol' and beneath those rousing shout choruses you'll hear music that is measured and magnificent and moody.

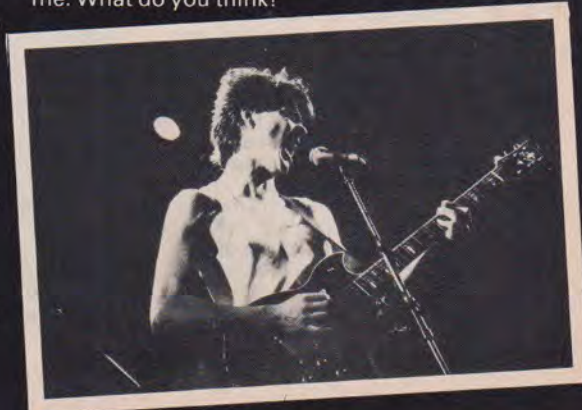
Big Country live are as loud and proud as anybody else you'll read about in *Kerrang!* And probably louder and prouder than most. With those two guitars lurching and lungeing as dangerously as a Glaswegian attempting a Highland Fling after fifteen pints of heavy they're liable suddenly to punch out at the pit of your stomach at the slightest provocation.

Strangely though Stuart Adamson tries to play down the Scottish angle. Even though the flavour and feelings of his homeland colour every song he writes and every note he plays on the guitar. But then he also hates labels and refuses to allow anybody to pin tags on Big Country and what they do.

"How can you describe anybody's music? As soon as you come up with some kind of definition then you put up barriers and draw boundaries. And then you become identified with one particular scene and you find yourself compartmentalised.

"There's too much of that going on at the moment. I don't want it happening to us. If you really want me to describe what Big Country are about I'd say we played stirring, spirited stuff. Music to move mountains by!"

That certainly sounds like *Kerrang!* talk to me. What do you think?



NEWS AND REVIEWS OF VIDEOS, BOOKS AND FILMS.

VIDEOS

'FISTFUL OF DOLLARS' (Warner Home)

'FOR A FEW DOLLARS MORE' (Warner Home)

AVAILABLE ON video for the first time, it was this brace of movies (plus the fabled 'Good, The Bad & The Ugly') that almost single-handedly changed the acceptable face of the Western.

Up until the advent of these low-budget shots, Westerns had been the prime domain of Hollywood. Moreover, via the swaggering likes of John Wayne, Gary Cooper and Roy Rogers, the West had a well-defined, simple, philosophy – the goodies were nearly always purest white, and baddies had the blackest of hearts. You hissed at the nasties, cheered the cavalry, and knew damn well that any killings would be executed with a sense of style.

Sergio Leone altered all of this. His films (dubbed 'Spaghetti Westerns', due to their Italian background) had an almost amoral tone, where death was a regular feature, detailed in the most gratuitous of manners, and where an air of mysticism pervaded the cruelty. True, the story plots were traditionally confusing, and direct steals from Japanese Samurai-style fifties films. But, they were shot with a certain charisma. The use of camera angles and the spartan script gave this form of film a unique character.

On top of this, Leone was lucky enough to discover in Clint Eastwood a mega-star who could carry a movie, and make things happen. He was also astute enough to employ Ennio Morricone for the soundtracks. Without a shadow of a doubt, it was the spectacular combination of this triumvirate that ultimately provided the sparkle, and had the money rolling in at the box offices.

These two films are now regarded as classics in their own right. And, if they suffer comparison with 'Good...' it's only because this last-named effort reached heights rarely attained in any movie before or since. All the principal elements are present here, though – the loner with no name, the moody (almost eerie) brutality, the greed and the occasional spice of cruel humour. Yes, these are very much macho films, but that doesn't alter their status as low-

life masterpieces, providing pure escapist entertainment.

'SUSPIRIA' (Palace)

FOR MY money, this is one of the best horror movies ever made. Whilst very low on special effects and 'nasty, nasty' moments, it nonetheless manages to invoke an almost continuous atmosphere of menace. You're never sure what'll happen next, and you'll be forever leaping out of your comfy armchair in a state of fright.

What makes 'Suspiria' such a 'shock/horror sensation' is its simplicity: the use of stark colours, sharp camera angles and a quite superb soundtrack from an unknown Italian electro-band called Goblin – all are astonishing in their low-cost effectiveness.

Of course, the story-line itself isn't exactly loaded with originality. A young American Ms (superbly portrayed by Jessica Harper – you may remember her as the heroine from 'Phantom Of The Paradise') comes to Germany to pursue her ballet studies (obviously intent on following the goose-step method!) Unfortunately (or, from the film's viewpoint, fortunately) the school she chooses to enrol at is the surrogate home of a witches coven. And naturally, having been brought up on 'Wonder Woman'/'Batgirl' TV shows, our very American Ms decides to single-handedly dispose of these undesirables, which seems rather brutal as, for the most part, these closet-satanists are very much the type you could take for a cucumber sandwich tea with the local vicar!

It all makes for a thoroughly sweaty frightener, so superbly pieced together that the lack of both credible characters and a sense of humour are an irrelevance.

'AMITYVILLE II – THE POSSESSION' (Thorn-EMI)

THE GENERAL, sequels are rather less impressive than the originals from which they glean their inspiration, something that's undoubtedly true of 'Amityville II', which is rather an embarrassment because 'Amityville' itself wasn't exactly a world-beater!

The latter film at least had the interesting dimension of being supposedly based on fact. But 'II'

is just total fiction, set presumably in the fabled hell-house merely to try and gain some form of limited credibility. Indeed, nowhere on the publicity blurb will you find any mention of the fact that this is fiction, entirely fiction, and nothing but fiction. Ah, well...

As a horror movie in its own right, this, though, isn't bad. It's just isn't very good. The basic plot revolves around a hum-drum everyday American family who move into the house, and soon encounter all sorts of strange spiritual happenings – despite keeping the bourban under lock and key.

Slowly the evil that pervades the abode takes over one of the family, with dire and murderous consequences. And even the local priest is helpless under the assault.

I can't say this is a recommended buy or even hire, but if you've got a couple of hours going spare, and someone else has a copy of 'Amityville II', then check it out.

'HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES' (Magnet)

Not the classic Rathbone/Bruce movie, but rather the 1959 Hammer re-make with Peter Cushing as Sherlock Holmes and Christopher Lee as the much-troubled Sir Henry Baskerville.

'THE BODY SNATCHER' (Nostalgia)

1945 adaptation of the Robert Louis Stephenson tale about medical gore and grime in the local Edinburgh graveyards. Boris Karloff is quite superb as the leery-eyed grave-robbing nastie John Gray, whilst Val Lewton directs with a sense for the gothic.

'I EAT YOUR SKIN' (Force)

Put out in 1971 as a cinema double bill with the gourmet-style 'I Drink Your Blood', this is a voodoo piccie made in 1964 by cult low-budget director Del Tenney. The plot revolves around a medic on Voodoo Island who does demonic things with a syringe in the search for a cure to all ills. Rather like an updated version of 'Dr Blood's Coffin'.

'DR JEKYLL'S DUNGEON OF DEATH' (Wizard)

The original Stephenson story updated to modern San Francisco, where Dr. Jekyll's grandson is repeating his

ancestor's mistakes, to the letting of much blood. Promoted under the heading 'Dr Jekyll is a sadistic, evil, terrifying madman – you'll love him!'

'I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE' (Nostalgia)

One of the masterpieces of the forties, this involves such classic plot themes as voodoo, supernatural phenomena and a slice of upfront mystery. Directed by Val Lewton and starring Francis Dee/Tom Conway.

'BRIDE OF THE MONSTER' (Admit One)

Not a reference to Sharon Osbourne, but rather one of the many quite amazing works of sub-art pulp thrown together by director Edward D. Wood. Bela Lugosi, towards the end of his variable career, plays the part of Dr. Varonov, a maniac determined to create a master race through the use of atomic radiation! The 'bride' comes into it via Varonov's assistant Lobo, who abducts her for some strange purpose. Quite what this is, you'll have to catch this video to see.

'TWO THOUSAND MANIACS' (Force)

No, not a crowd of Motorhead fans at Hammy Odeon. Rather, this is a tale of the American Civil War – 100 years after the event! A bunch of long-dead southerners follow Charlie Daniels call and 'rise again' to create much trouble for modern yankees. The film stars Connie Mason (a stalwart of the fabled 'Blood Feast') and James Wood (who was also in the 'BF' cast).

NEWS

Currently creating quite a stir in the States in the crazily entitled 'THEY EAT SCUM' which even managed to secure for itself a mention in the incredibly conservative Dow Jones & Company financial newspaper, which claimed it to be "the vilest and most revolting performance of sadism I have ever seen". All this 'positive' feed-back is bound to turn director Nick Zedd into a major figure on the 'hack 'n' slash' scene, and his next movie is to be called 'GEEK MAGGOT BINGO'!

The newest film from the

FILMS

'XTRO' (X)

IF 'ET' was the antidote to that genre which depicts a meeting between alien cultures as an excuse for much schlock gore, then I suppose 'Xtro' should be perceived as the 'antidote to the antidote'. Have no doubts or illusions, this is one movie that is not 'family entertainment', delivering a violent, brutal blow to the romantic notions of 'ET'-ism, yet doing it in such a way as to still be rollicking good fun!

This is the tale of one of Sam Ellis, a good American citizen, who, through no fault of his own, is abducted by a visiting alien spacecraft and taken on a long, long voyage to their strange world, resembling nothing so much as a psychedelic, low-budget Disneyland. Three years on, having undergone a dramatic physical transformation into a creature disconcertingly similar to Cardew Robinson after a bungled face-lift, Ellis returns to Earth, where he proceeds to satisfy his newly-acquired lust for human flesh by bumping off an *au pair*, her boyfriend and the occasional neighbour – a carnivorous diet he pursues with all the cynical, ghoulish relish of Bruce Grobelaar felling Gordon McQueen in the recent Milk Cup Final.

Indeed, just about the only person who can stand up to him is his wife, Rachel, who in cahoots with new-found lover Joe (well, three years away from the nuptial nest is a LONG time), sets about destroying this 'monster in her bosom'. What makes her quest even more urgent is that her son, Tony, is strangely drawn to his much-altered father, mainly because 'daddy' brings him a unique gift from his sojourn – the power to turn his every fantasy and wish into reality (well, it makes a change from 'Action Man' kits, right?)

Just how this desperate domestic drama is eventually, and bloodily, resolved, makes for a very well constructed unpretentious movie. The plot might well have about as much

originality as a list of British Rail excuses for train cancellations. But everyone involved in this project (director Harry Bromley Davenport, writers Iain Cassie/Robert Smith, plus principal thespians Bernice Stegers/Philip Sayer/Danny Brainin/Simon Nash) pulls together to conjure up a tightly-reined, mini-masterpiece.

'ET' may make more bucks at the box office, but 'Xtro' makes its point that 'Not all extra-terrestrials are friendly' with equal (if not greater) sharpness.

FUNERAL HOME – starring Lesleh Donaldson and Key Hawtrey

VIDEODROME – starring Debbie Harry and James Woods

THE FILM was so gruesome, the ads drooled, they couldn't show scenes on TV; so violent they wouldn't let you in without a birth certificate and probably a note from your mother. A good horror film, right? Wrong! This was definitely the desperation school of Advertising. You'd get more blood and gore at a football match; you'd get more suspense watching 'Crossroads'. Not exactly coffin up the goods.

'Funeral Home' is set in a run-down rustic area of Canada – half-dead trees, half-dead hicks, weed-strewn paths, the worst ad for the country since the last Loverboy album – in one of the proverbial 'nice quiet little towns' that are always good for horrors.

A dull but well-meaning teenage girl, Heather, arrives in town to help her god-fearing granny, Mrs Chalmers, open a new tourist hotel. Not your average bed and breakfast joint this; it used to be a funeral home, and is still getting the odd corpse to play around with, as the few guests are disappearing one by one.

Who should we suspect of these crimes (none of which we really see; renting the house cost them so much they didn't have anything left over for red dye), but the dim-witted gardener,

Billy, who spends his days leaning on an axe and drooling at the women (no resemblance to Ted Nugent suggested!) Until Heather and her new boyfriend, a similarly dull but well-meaning teenager and brother of the local cop, hear noises coming from the cellar. There's someone in the basement, and he's not amused at having people in his house. Heather's granny knows who it is, but she's not saying, so they have to find out...

There's one or two pretty nasty moments in 'Funeral Home': at least they come up with one novel means of execution – death by embalming needle. Other than that it's tedious, boring and a big waste of an hour and a half.

"You mustn't go down in the cellar," they say in the film. You'd be better off not going to 'Funeral Home' at all.

Ah, this is more like it.

'Videodrome', another Great White North production, gets Canada off the hook, with its horrific view of the future, its hallucinatory use of blood and gunk, its nightmarish tale of TV take-over and its scenes of young men whipping Blondie's Debbie Harry!

James Woods, the weasly man who played the psychopathic cop killer in 'The Onion Field', has been spruced up to look like a smarmy small-time video station operator. Set in the future, video has taken over the country. There's video stations for anything and everything you'd want to watch in your living room. Jimmy's station is for people who want to watch sex. Porn peddlers come in and out of his office offering flicks of eastern promise, but Jim wants something kinkier. He thinks he's found it when his trusty sidekick and technician, whose job it is to home in on other video stations around the world to nick ideas, gets on his satellite a snuff porn station. S&M 24 hours-a-day to the death. Sounds just like a Judas Priest tour. Jimmy is mesmerised.

So is his girlfriend, a kind of Dear Marge of the airwaves, lonely hearts advisor Debbie Harry. On their first date she asks him to put a cigarette out on her. By the second date it's razors. By

the third it's everlasting love and 'Whip It' records. Jim tells Deb about the snuff station – called Videodrome – Debbie reckons she's just the person for the starring role, Jim tries to persuade her to go on something safer like 'The Generation Game', but off she goes.

When Jim tries to track her down, he discovers Videodrome doesn't come from some Middle Eastern country, as he'd thought. Unless you're counting Middle Eastern America. Seems the S&M's going on in Philadelphia. But before he can rescue her, strange things start happening to our hero. Bizarre hallucinations. Debbie's face bulges until she looks like Boy George; strange things start coming out of the TV set; video cassettes warp and melt and stick to his hands. Hmm. Has TV warped Jim's mind? Or is it a strange American political terrorist organisation about to take over people's minds and turn their visions and ideas on and off like a TV set? And if it's the latter, what's going to happen to Debbie and what will they make Jim do? Plenty!

That's all we're giving away. Anyone who's seen earlier efforts by the movie's director – cult horror film chief David Cronenberg – will have some idea what to expect in the way of over-the-top guts and gore and terrifying special effects. This is the man who brought you 'Rabid', the film where porn star Marilyn Chambers gets people foaming at the mouth by whamming them in the eyeballs with a needle-shaped straw built into a picturesque hole in her armpit; the man who brought you 'They Came From Within', where walking VD germs looking like sausages soaked in ketchup crawl along the bottom of bathtubs and burst out through victims' bellies; the man who last brought you 'Scanners', with the exploding heads and melting eyeballs. Horror fans of the "If it don't splatter, it don't matter" school of thought will be more than satisfied; so will sci-fi fans, TV haters and Debbie Harry fans.

One suggestion. Take along a bucket. Scenes like the one where the video tapes are shoved into a massive weeping wound in Jim's chest are a bit tough to take, though you've got to admit it's a more convenient way of storing unwanted cassettes than cluttering the room with racks.

See 'Videodrome'. It'll grow in you!

LAURA CANYON



prolific David Cronenberg is entitled 'DEAD ZONE', and is based on yet another of Stephen King's novels. Starring Christopher Walken, Brooke Adams, Martin Sheen and Anthony Zerbe, it's plot takes in both political hi-jinx and psychic phenomena.

The return of 'THE WILD WOMEN OF WONGA'? No, actually 'HUNDRA' looks to be rather more sinister. The woman of the title (played by Lauren Landon) is queen of an Amazonian tribe who live apart from all males, except when breeding necessities demand otherwise. However, when a brood of wandering barbarians destroy the girls' village, Hundra

sets off to wreak vengeance.

"A deliberate attempt to return to the Gothic horror style established by Hammer Films", is how the Cannon Group describe their latest horror epic 'HOUSE OF LONG SHADOWS'. Starring the heavyweight quartet of Peter Cushing, Vincent Price, Christopher Lee and John Carradine, it's actually a version of Earl Derr Biggers' classic 1920's gothic play 'SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPLATE', which has been filmed at least five times before, under varying titles.

The film has been scripted by Michael Armstrong (who's worked in the past on such movies as 'MARK OF THE DEVIL' – nothing to do with Maggie

Thatcher's son – Ed), and directed by cult personage Peter Walker (no relation to the cricketing buff), whose previous credits include 'HOUSE OF WHIPCORD', 'FRIGHTMARE' and 'THE FLESH & BLOOD SHOW'.

'After Mad Max, came Stone'. So runs the publicity line for 'STONE', the latest biker spectacular from Australia. Featuring Ken Shorter in the title role, it concerns an offbeat policeman who sets out to save the 'Grave Diggers' bike gang from assassination after one of them has witnessed a political leader's untimely death at a rally. Just released in the London area, 'STONE' is all set for national distribution in the near future.

NO NO NO

MAN Hope and Anchor, London.

THE SPACE trucking revival starts here!

Throughout the early seventies, Man were virtually the only British outfit to challenge the supremacy of the great American jamming bands like the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane/Starship, Allman Brothers and Lynyrd Skynyrd.

Weighing in hippily but happily, halfway between the acid-crazed excesses of Hawkwind and the more laid-back country rock of Nick Lowe's Brinsley Schwarz, the Man band's fame was soon to mushroom out from the Welsh valley communes which spawned them. Their spores spread throughout the British Isles and thence to Europe and, especially, Germany where, like early Yes, they were hailed as stars long before they ever cracked it over here.

In fact, despite a dozen fine albums, two wizard guitarists (Deke Leonard and Micky Jones) and one of rock's heaviest drummers ever (Terry 'Rockpile, Meatloaf and now Dire Straits' Williams), Man never did quite crack it at all. Right up to the end, which came on two glorious Christmas nights at the Roundhouse in 1976, they remained a true Cult band. A legend in their own lifetime.

But one which, I'm glad to report, is

still very much alive, kicking and, as they used to say in the days when only bank clerks wore ties and anybody with hair above their collar was a real straight arrow, ready to kick ass again.

Warming up for a month in Europe prior to May dates as part of the Marquee's 25th birthday celebrations, the new-look Man band overcame a shakey start to launch into a marvellously loud and dangerous 'Ride And The View'. Deke Leonard stepped up to the microphone, Martin Ace (bass) and new skinsman John Weathers picked up on his throbbling, diesel Mack chords, Micky Jones stamped on his echo pedal and Man simply shot through the ceiling like they really did have methadine on their minds.

And they louder the got, the more the sardine crowd sweating in the Hope and Anchor's tiny cellar really got off on it. New songs like 'Visionaries Go Blind' proved there was still gold to be dynamited from the seams, but it was the old favourites like 'Hard Way To Live', 'Many Are Called But Few Get Up' and the stoner's anthem 'Bananas' that made Man's hour and a half set float by in what seemed like seconds.

This was real man's music and, unless I'm greatly mistaken, you should be hearing a lot more of it real soon.

CHAS DE WHALLEY

U2 Hammersmith Palais, London.

PEOPLE WHO are currently knocking U2 for their outmoded approach and for being 'just another rock band' have, and here we go again, obviously never seen or have any intention of seeing the band in action. It seems to be nail-U2-to-their-own-cross year, a shame really, but with 'War' going straight in at No.1 and a sell-out UK tour behind them, this being the final night, the band now have ample opportunity to poke two fingers at their critics and to get on with being one of the finest live acts of the past decade.

Whether or not you can stomach Bono's quasi-religious, banner-carrying quest, becomes of secondary importance in the concert setting, and from the first glorious steps the crowd ignited as if plugged in to some universal power socket. It's clear that Bono is genuinely sincere when it comes to crowd control - something that has been the band's major asset from the outset. HE IS convincing, even more so than on vinyl, and, with the band behind him dismissing the decadence of bass/drum/guitar line-ups with ferocious attacks, U2 have never looked stronger.

The rhythm machine of Larry

Mullen and Adam Clayton cascades into shuffle and skiffle thunder, whilst The Edge drives his rasping guitar astutely from one peak to another. As Bono's sidekick, he is the perfect man to compliment the singer's crowd manipulation, and in taking on keyboards and flute as well as that familiar guitar drill he deserves far more acclaim as a musician than people are willing to give him.

At the end of the day however, U2 belongs to Bono. As a frontman he can't be faulted. Neither patronising nor aloof, he commits himself to an audience and stirs something in all of us, whatever your preconceptions beforehand. Amicably calming the many fans who leapt onstage to embrace him, plucking objects from outstretched hands and inviting a couple of swooning girls to hand out the obligatory flowers, he comes across as a secure yet adventurous performer who genuinely enjoys his vocation.

He led us through the very best of the U2 repertoire, the opener 'Gloria' swiftly giving way to tracks from 'War' such as 'New Years Day', 'Seconds', 'Sunday Bloody Sunday' and 'Surrender' the latter transformed here into an emotive masterpiece.

'Tomorrow' was briefly interrupted by an over-enthusiastic fan who, in his manic attempts to reach Bono and seemingly strangle the man,

KOWALSKI

DEBUT ALBUM **OVERMAN UNDERGROUND** ON TOUR WITH
SPEAR OF DESTINY

- APRIL
- 19 NEWCASTLE, DINGWALLS
 - 20 MANCHESTER, METRO
 - 21 BRISTOL, DINGWALLS
 - 25 SHEFFIELD, POLYTECHNIC
 - 26 BIRMINGHAM, POWERHOUSE
 - 27 COVENTRY, POLYTECHNIC
 - 28 NORWICH, UNIV. OF EAST ANGLIA
 - 29 LOUGHBOROUGH, UNIVERSITY
 - 30 LEICESTER, UNIVERSITY

- MAY
- 2 ST ALBANS, CITY HALL
 - 3 GUILDFORD, CIVIC HALL
 - 4 SOUTHAMPTON, UNIVERSITY
 - 5 LONDON, LYCEUM
 - 6 BRIGHTON, TOP RANK

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succeeded in briefly wiping out the PA. For one fleeting moment the situation hung in the balance. Many other acts would have lost their spark, but U2 pulled through and came back twice as strong.

As the encores rolled, so Bono invited both Stuart Adamson of support act Big Country and Mike Peters of The Alarm, support for the early part of the tour, to join the band in the Dylan tune, 'Knocking On Heaven's Door', so ending an uplifting show from one of the most exciting bands to have graced the UK.

As the echo of Larry's snare shuddered round the hall and the band bounded up the exit stairs, there can't have been too many people who had not been touched by U2's efforts. For the duration of the gig, the critics had no weight and the adverse reviews didn't mean a damn thing. Nothing can stop U2 now.

CHRIS WATTS

THE ENID Marquee, London

A COLD shiver of fear and discomfort coursed through me when I chanced upon a performance by The Enid at the Marquee recently. It came when realisation dawned that I was among fanatical converts who alone were privy to the secrets of the strange events on stage.

It reminded me of a meeting of Exegesis, where the leader of the mind cult, Robert, is wildly cheered by the congregation. By chance the leader of The Enid is also a Robert... Robert John Godfrey to be precise. A big built, impressive man with wild staring eyes and a mass of whiskers, he presides over an array of keyboards and plucks symphonies from the electronic circuitry, looking like the Sorcerer in Disney's 'Fantasia'. He presents an extraordinary spectacle, and The Enid are an

extraordinary band.

At first my heart sank when I saw only two people on the rostrum, one of them clutching a silent guitar, the other reciting a poem to a hushed and reverent crowd. No wonder my fellow rock critics have erected a barrier of silence and exclusion around the band, I mused. They had been launched, a hippie cult band, at the worst possible time, just when punk curses and scorn were being heaped on all aspects of classical and/or progressive rock. As a result they have been denied access to the media and the kind of promotion that could have turned them into a sensation.

Watching them for the first time I went through a variety of emotions, commencing with latent hostility, suspicion and expectations of musical inadequacy and boredom. These were instantly laid low. I was then intrigued, amused, drawn in and finally swept along with pleasure, as Robert and his partner Steve Stewart on guitar, performed a series of musical dramas, rich in melody and tonal textures.

The poem and the songs were dedicated to lost souls, the impending destruction of the earth and the sheer wonder of the universe. 'He's very intense,' I heard one spectator observe, as Robert played a solo keyboard symphony, singing along to his notes with wild cries and an expression of ecstasy. Using tapes, synthesisers, electric pianos and doubtless a swarm of micro chips, Robert brilliantly reproduced the warm sound of french horns, strings and organs, building from soft beginnings to a rhapsodic climax. There wasn't a dry eye in the house by the time he'd finished.

He explained his ideas and themes with the burning zeal of Brigham Young leading the settlers to Salt Lake, and talked about a piece called 'Bright Star' which brought comfort to those who feared the end of the world. Then came two numbers with Chris

North on drums, one called 'Something Wicked This Way Comes' – a bow to Shakespeare and Ray Bradbury perhaps, but more specifically about international diplomacy.

By now The Enid were hotting up, and a more bizarre three-piece band it would be hard to find. But the drums and guitar rocked without any loss of power. Steve too looked startling and mysterious, with heavy make up, and an expression of hunger and lust, as if he were Young Dracula cutting his first set of fangs.

They need vast cash injections and whisking off to America. They would take California by storm. In the meantime, their loyal British following will sustain them, with a devotion unique in the annals of rock.

CHRIS WELCH

ROX/SILVERWING Marquee, London

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT! And, boy, do we all need it now. What a welcome change it made to see two fine glam bands battling it out down at the sweat box, on this cold and rainy Good Friday night.

The last time I saw Silverwing was about three years ago at the near-legendary Bandwagon, and boy were they funny in those days. I hadn't laughed so much since the cat died. They had a certain appeal, though, based on their totally over-the-top attitude to glam rock'n'roll – Dave Roberts even delivered some well-rehearsed Paul Stanley-style raps! All they really lacked was stage presence, though they more than made up for that with Astra fireworks and confetti bombs.

So what a surprise I got when they took the stage this time round. For starters, Roberts now looks like a

reject from the Sex Gang Children, he's into that sort of thing, I'm led to believe. Come on Dave, give us a break, and get your spandex back, you don't look right dressed like a tramp. Still, at least Silverwing have learnt to play their instruments, something that enabled them to turn in fine renditions of 'Rock n' Roll Are Four Letter Words', 'Caught Red Handed' and 'Wanting You'.

The band went down well and sensibly saved their best number till encore time – you guessed it, the Geoff Barton-penned 'Flashbomb Fever', a classic if ever there was one. Now if only they could write more songs like that.

Rox, meanwhile, are in a different league. They've still got a long way to go before they can enter the Mötley Crüe premier division, but they're definitely the best English glam band I've come across.

I mean, have you ever seen a drummer that takes up the whole stage? Skin-beater Bernie Emerald had to use a step ladder to get to his kit, and once there was forced to play in a crouched position to avoid demolishing the lighting rig.

The Rox live show starts off with an Angel-type intro tape, only this version is a clever rearrangement of the Lord's prayer. And with lines like 'give us our daily mayhem', you just knew what followed had to be good; it was.

Kicking off with 'Dressed To Kill' the lads could do no wrong. It was powerhouse rock American-style that still showed a refreshing originality. 'Sidewalk Struttin'', 'Sweet Sixteen', all wizzed by and were so impressive it surprises me that Rox haven't already been snapped up by a major label. If you're into Starz, Legs Diamond, Angel, Mötley Crüe and Kiss, do yourself a favour by checking out Rox next time they play in your neck of the woods – you won't be disappointed. XAVIER RUSSELL

FROM THE 1983 'THUNDER AND LIGHTNING' TOUR

Thin Lizzy

THUNDER AND LIGHTNING

From the album of the same name

STILL IN LOVE WITH YOU (LIVE)

Recorded live at Hammersmith Odeon 10th March 1983



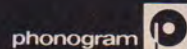
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Still in Love With You Produced by Darren Wharton
Thunder and Lightning Produced by Thin Lizzy & Chris Tsangarides



VERTIGO





FROM PAGE 5

in thick Geordie tones: "Motorhead is Lemmy, Phil and Eddie; if any one of them leaves it won't be Motorhead anymore and I for one shall stop following them."

Like Status Quo, Motorhead have always been more a sports team than a rock and roll outfit, in as much as their following has a rabid dedication similar to that of sports fans and the energy bouncing from stage to auditorium resembles an athletic workout. Also, the 'one of the boys' camaraderie between fans and band has had a lot to do with the rock solid identity of the group which, along with strong visual images, makes them one of the highest grossing merchandise merchants in Britain. Then again, in the final analysis, if you ask three different funsters for their interpretation of Motorhead, you'll probably get three different answers.

Motorhead is Motorhead is Motorhead ...

"As long as me and Phil are in the band, it's Motorhead," was Lemmy's gruff retort, sealing the argument.

Ian 'Lemmy' Kilminster does not strike you as having the aura of a troubled man. While hacks like myself continue to plough out reams of self-indulgent thesis

on the future viability of the group, here is one chap who won't lose a second of sleep worrying about the national reaction to the new Motorhead incarnation.

"In a way it was quite fortunate that we didn't have time to think or worry about the changes in line-up, as it all happened so quickly. We'll leave the worrying to the management - hargh, hargh! Initially, Robbo came in as a favour to help us out and it wasn't until we did the Japanese tour, when a reporter asked him if he was going to become a permanent fixture in the group and he said 'och aye' or summat like that, that we knew he was with us.

"As far as changes and general reaction to them goes, I've always had a pragmatic attitude to these types of situation. When it comes down to it, if we're all happy with the results then I don't give a shit what everybody else thinks, although I hope readers don't take that last comment too seriously.

"The fact is, Motorhead have always been a law unto themselves - we've always made the last decisions and had the final say, though, believe me, people HAVE tried to change us. We've had to put up with criticisms at all levels, we were the 'best worst band in the

world', but if we'd listened to them or been affected by them, the group would probably have folded years ago. As far as I'm concerned, this is the best album we've done so far, although that doesn't mean I didn't like the other records; in fact I don't think 'Iron Fist' is as bad as some people made out."

As far as the recording of the new album goes, Motorhead utilised the regular 'riff it up, belt it out on the spot' method that's always served them well in the past, except this time, as Lemmy himself acknowledges, producer Platt's contributions served to make this a superior product to its predecessors.

And as far as the issue of 'Fast' Eddie Clarke's lightning exit goes, Lemmy refuses to dwell on the subject too much, although he points out that it hasn't put him off further musical duets or other bizarre couplings.

"When Robbo joined I suddenly realised how static and immobile Eddie was; Brian's given the whole visual side of the band a new lease of life. As far as Eddie's band goes, I haven't heard anything by them but Eddie always wanted to form the new Led Zeppelin and by all accounts he has. Just what we need, eh? I think that Eddie had been dissatisfied with Motorhead for quite a while and that the

Wendy O affair was just the final straw. On reflection, the whole thing has worked out well for everyone."

I asked Lemmy how much his way of thinking was effected by outside influences ...

"I always take notice of what people say, but I'd rather talk to any two kids in the street than any 10 people in the record business. The thing is, you can't let it rule your life, because you can't please everybody *all* of the time and we never made it by trying to please people, we made it by being what we were, y'know, which is what we'll carry on doing.

"When people say: 'this isn't Motorhead', my response is that it *is* M'head because I'm playing on it and Phil's playing on it and the new guitar player with M'head's playing on it; so therefore it must be Motorhead!"

How different is the new MH? "We seem to have got tighter. Mebbe it's the format or mood that's changing. I'm very pleased with the new album. But I'm obviously a bit nervy about it because it's a new branch off the tree."

And in a whirlpool of chops and changes, Motorhead's tree seems to be one of the few that has its roots firmly embedded.

KERROSSWORD!

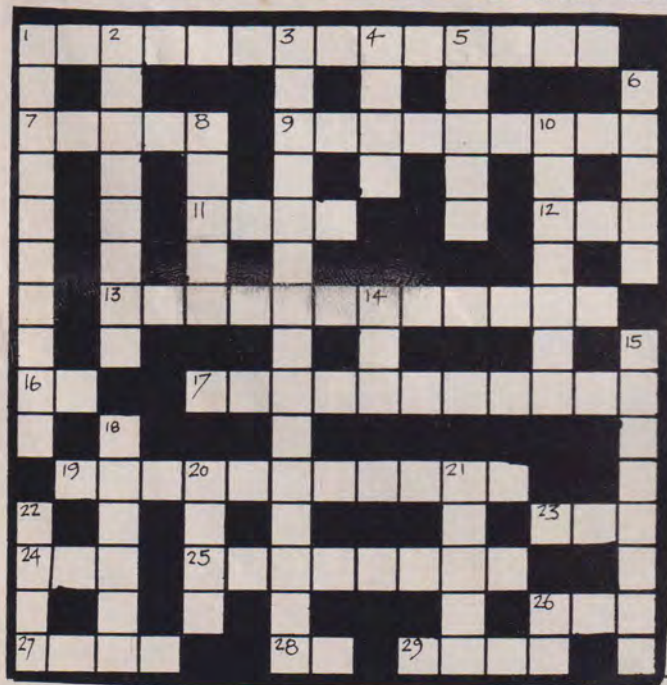
ACROSS

1. The Anvil Chorus put fair haired ladies in mourning (6,2,5)
7. One of fortune for BOC (5)
9. An order from UFO (3,2,4)
11. Grand Prix's Beirne (4)
12. The Kinks waited till this part of the day (3)
13. Just one sort of black bird for the Scorpions (8,4)
16. A voltage in sin city? (1,1)
17. He played drums on this flight tonight (6,5)
19. He's (w)axed for Flame and 29 across (5,6)
23. Co. for Burrell (3)
24. ZZ's summit (3)
25. See 10 down
26. They raced with the devil (3)
27. ... and he was top priority (4)
28. Lack of heavy petting for UFO (2)
29. It propels Tyler's Smith? (4)

DOWN

1. Venomous, but dullish tin? (5,5)
2. Lemmy going OTT? (8)
3. The blues for Hanoi Rocks (4,11)
4. Does Dumpty screw 'em on his rusty bolts? (4)
5. and 26. Def Lepps version of 'Release Me' (3,2,2)
6. They invited us to feel the noise (5)
8. Ozzy drove a crazy one (5)
10. and 25. Did this Purple song inspire a recent Supertramp 45? (3,4,5,3)
14. Month for a Queen person (3)
15. Descriptive of Sammy's Hampton (8)
18. This Nick was a warhorse (6)
20. Mr. Storace (4)
21. Quo built a paper one (5)
22. Purple put one on the highway (4)
26. see 5.

SOLUTION
ACROSS 1. Blondes in Black 7. Agent 9. Let it Roll 11. Andy 12. End 13. Lonesome Crow 16. AC 17. Darryl Sweet 19. Jimmy Crespo 23. Bad 24. Top 25. Rainy Day 26. Gun 27. Rory 28. No. 29. Aero.
DOWN 1. Black Metal 2. Overkill 3. Self Destruction 4. Nuts 5. Let it 6. Slide 8. Train 10. One More 14. May 15. Standing 18. Simper 20. Marc 21. Plane 22. Star 26. Go.



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I HAVE been a reader of your excellent mag since its inception. In that time I have noticed many fine articles and photographs dealing with one of my all-time favourite axemen, Ritchie Blackmore. However, there is one thing about the man in black which puzzles me and which has not been covered by *Kerrang!* I should say at this point that I collect information about his career as a kind of hobby.

The puzzle is this: it is obvious from old photos that Ritchie was going bald a couple of years ago. In recent times he has re-emerged with a remarkable head of hair which does not look, from a distance, like a conventional wig or transplant. Do you know exactly what Mr Blackmore has had done, where it was performed, the cost involved and so on? This information would be very useful for my 'archives' and also for those thin-haired bangers with some cash to spare! — **Anton James, Dealtry Road, Putney, London SW15.**

THANKS FOR the excellent article on Def Leppard in *Kerrang!* No. 36, it's nice to know that some British people realise what a great band they are, and that they haven't 'sold out' to the US. Just because they're successful here doesn't mean that they don't care about England. If they packed up and moved to the States, I might be able to understand their resentment in the UK, but they're still living over there and they toured there first. That should show everyone how important it is to them to be successful at home. I only hope more British rockers see the light and quit holding grudges that have no basis. — **A Lep fan, Louisiana, USA.**

WELL, I'm sitting down right now to give you a list of internationally accepted Benelux bands:

- 1/**Picture** — 3 LP's, of which the last was reviewed by Malcolm Dome (or: Dumb?) himself! And he liked it too!
- 2/**Bodine** — 2 LP's, of which the last is very good, and pretty popular in the USofA (they were going to tour there with Accept!)
- 3/**Highway Chile** — 1 LP, not even reviewed in *Kerrang!* Their demo is known all over the earth!
- 4/**Golden Earring** — dozens of LP's, not exactly HM, still very popular in the States, where they are touring right now (for the 10th time!)
- 5/**Vandenberg** — 1 LP, also touring in the States now, supporting Uncle Ozzy.
- 6/**Killer** — 2 LP's, of which the last is a must for Motorheadbangers, who, like me piss on Robertson's solos!
- 7/**Numerous** bands that are already known in the States and Europe, like **Eardanger, Savage, Hammerhead, Crossfire, Impact, Exciter**, etc., who will never be famous until some HM magazine pays some attention to them, instead of to crap like Spider, Marillion, Def Leppard, China Rogue, ELP, etc.

I hope next time you send someone to the continent, you won't send someone unaware of the scene over here, incompetent, skidditzovrenikk, but someone who knows bands other than Priest, Saxon and Maiden.

This also goes for Sylvie Simmons (I hope she ain't related to the God of Thunder!). She has the nerve to call **Malice, Priest** impersonators, well, let me tell you, they're 10 times as heavy as Priest! And another thing, **Cirith Ungol** do NOT sound lethargic, and if

you think they do, remember their album was recorded in '81; their track on 'Metal Massacre' is much heavier, in fact, it happens to be the most deadly track on the album, and their vocalist Tim sure has the best voice in HM!!

Dear fellow-headbangers, I will tell you what's wrong with every HM magazine: they have to compare every band with another band! WHY, for Satan's sake? Stop it right now!! By the way, don't ever compare **Demon Flight** and **Hyksos** with Sabbath again, they're far too original for that! — **Mercyful Kees, Waalstraat 28, 3171 DB Poortugaal, Netherlands.**

WHO the hell came up with that list of LA HM acts in your last issue?

Whoever it was, sure was misinformed as they didn't even mention Hellion or Van Halen! Even though both bands play all over the country they still are LA bands.

As far as I can see it looks like *Kerrang!* is trying to destroy US metal by promoting only the bad groups! I'd like to open your eyes because US metal is a lot more than Bitch, Metallica and Motley Crue.

Furthermore in regards to the note about Metallica going to San Francisco, let's hope they don't come back. LA'll be better without such awful music. — **A dedicated LA rocker.**

I PROPOSE a competition between two bands, Rush versus Madness. Madness would be kidnapped and placed in a room with Geddy and Co. Rush would commence to play a really meaningful hardhitting song entitled 'I've Been Driving In My Car' to which Madness would proceed to play 'La Villa Strangiato' or 'YYZ'.

When Madness fail to achieve more than two notes, they are immediately put to death, except for Suggs (ha ha) who would be placed in Mr. Peart's bass drum while a solo is being played.

On the other hand, if they do succeed the members of Rush would eat their instruments (sorry Neil). — **From Andy (the fan in black).**

P.S. Would all you British readers please send me 1/2p then I could get a new hi-fi! And would Neil Peart, Ritchie Blackmore, David Coverdale, Kate Bush and Robert Plant send me their autographs? (Thankx, I would be grateful if Kate could bring hers personally).

I WISH someone would tell the HM/HR bands that we won't blow 'em up if they come over to this God-damn country, Northern Ireland no less! Why are these 'macho' hard rockers frightened of this place? It's about as dangerous as a bowl of mouldy custard!

And the bands that do manage to break this 'barrier' force us to pay higher prices than you MF's have to do on the mainland! We're just as crazy for good metal over here as you lot. Even trying to get some LP's and singles is bloody hard here. I've been trying to get the new Twisted Sister EP, but it probably won't be over for another two or three weeks. Come on, give us some live stuff to blow our minds with. — **Bee, a starved rocker in the depths of Northern Ireland.**

"I'm sorry to say that I find Pallas increasingly tedious, and the likes of IQ, Tamarisk, Pendragon and Solstice

are certainly not fit to be talked of in serious terms as yet."

WHAT? I scream! Apparently this piece of garbage was written by one Malcolm Dome (who is obviously a Marillion fanatic). The reason for me writing this is to state the fact that I am a Pallas fan (from Scotland by the way) and in my opinion the Aberdeen band are far superior to the Aylesbury bunch. In issue 37 Geoff Banks reviewed the Pallas LP and said that the original album is "something of a gem", and Mr Banks obviously knows what he is talking about (I'm glad somebody thinks so — GB), unlike the aforementioned Marillion fan. — **The Ripper, Wareing a Crown Of Thorns, somewhere in Atlantis.**

HAVING GOT into Glam Rock through the pages of your mag I decided to check out some gigs in the Midlands. It was at one such gig that I realised how good new bands can be; the band in question — **WIKKYD VIKKER!!!** The best word to describe this band is awesome and that ain't no bull. Vikker move about onstage like there ain't no gravity, the shows have to be seen to be believed. Not only do they put on some good visuals but the playing and vocals are just amazing. I was really knocked out about how good this band are at kickin' ass!! So *Kerrang!* if you don't give some coverage to Wikkyd Vikker soon there's no way you can claim to be covering the Glam Rock scene! — **Vik, Wolverhampton.**

I FELL out of my tree when I opened *Kerrang* issue 37 and saw my UN-fair

CRUNCH TIME FOR OZZ

From page 17

Dropping into Ozzy's hotel room prior to the gig at Baton Rouge, he looks like a man who's just reduced his worry beads to sawdust. Padding around in vest and underpants, he makes no secret of the fact that touring has now become a bind ("Somedays I've been bordering on suicide, I've been so depressed with it all"), and that he'd like more time for home-life and family concerns ("I've got a dog that was a pup at Christmas. When I get home it'll probably pick me up and bury me in the garden — it won't know me.")

The problems are clear to see though, on a brighter note, he's looking in reasonable shape and showing more concern for his health than ever before.

Last year I was under so much pressure that I was totally, permanently drunk. Around Christmas I thought, right, I've finally got home, so I went and bought 32 gallons of beer and got bombed out of my mind every day, until one morning I woke up and I couldn't move. I also started to get these really intense backaches, so I went to several

city mentioned in Mayhem. Yes — I live in Huntington, West Virginia, and I would like to apologise to Ozzy for the idiotic behaviour of my neighbours over your show.

Ya see, Ozzy, it's just that they were so bored with trying to curb drug abuse and failing, you provided them with a challenge ... one they thought they could WIN. You should also know that the crusade against you was headed by the same man who, two years ago, tried to run all the homosexuals outta town.

Metal is alive and well, and living in Huntington, but we've had to hide it well, so these nuts won't try to run all of us out on a rail! — **Motor Mouth, 'Funnington', West Virginia.**

DID HOWARD Johnson go to see Wrathchild with a blindfold on, and wearing earplugs? Or did he just not go at all?

Of all the blatant stupidity you've been throwing at us lately, this has to be the pits. Not only did the 'mighty ones' put on one of the best shows we have ever seen, but Rocky Shades surpassed himself in every way. Vocally perfect, oozing energy, he is definitely one of the best frontmen on the music scene.

So, in future send a decent reviewer to see this fantastic band, not a geriatric old wanker like Johnson, who obviously doesn't know a good act when he sees one. Get Johnson out of *Kerrang!* — **Paula and 'The Widow', West Hampstead, London.**

doctors who said I had to stop drinking, blah, blah, blah, but I just thought, they're crazy, let's have another one.

"Just recently, however, I had a fibre-optic test in Florida and the results showed I've got seven ulcers in my stomach. I haven't totally stopped drinking but the gaps between me having a drink are getting longer and longer. Eventually, I'll just quit altogether."

DIFFICULT TIMES then for the Ozz, but he's surviving and looking forward to the next album, hopefully to be completed with present personnel. Still smarting from the shabby politics that forced him to issue the 'Talk Of The Devil' live set against his better judgement ("I've never played that album, never"), he's determined to make 'BATM' something he can be proud of and, with this aim in mind, won't be rushed into the studio. This one, he's adamant, will be under his control.

Watch out for a blockbuster. The queue for straight-jackets starts here, though for everyone's sake (especially his own) he can't afford to leave it too much longer ...

UFO: RIP

PHIL MOGG FACES THE FANS

by Steve Gett

*"When it's time to rock
We're the only ones
No-one takes this block
And we'll never stop . . ."*
(*'When It's Time To Rock'* –
UFO – February 1983)

UFO . . . the final encounter . . . Hard to believe, but here I am on the band's last ever British outing and, while I must confess to being more than a shade sceptical about 'retirements' and 'farewell tours' in this business, this one's obviously for real. And in so many ways it's sad to see the final demise of one of the finest hard rock bands on the scene. In recent years they've undergone a series of personnel changes and been 'overtaken' by some of the newer HM combos, but still they've retained top-notch quality in their outputs.

There has been a wealth of talent in the group over the years. Paul Chapman and Michael Schenker are unquestionably 'Masters Of The Axe', while Paul Raymond and Neil Carter are two extremely talented multi-instrumentalists. Pete Way has built a reputation as one of the most lively and entertaining

continues over

from page 41

bass players to have ever graced a rock 'n' roll stage and Phil Mogg is a compelling frontman. OK, Moggy might not be technically amazing but he's always had great feeling in his voice and is certainly underrated as a lyricist.

I could go on, but I guess you've probably got the message by now... UFO have always been one of my favourite outfits. Ever since I first saw them back in 1976 at Crawley Technical College I was a devoted follower – can't deny it, never will, even though I did get banned from their shows for a year! But that's another story...

Everyone has their own views about the *perfect* UFO line-up, but to be honest I've enjoyed every one I've seen, including the latest incarnation which witnessed Phil Mogg and rock-solid skinbeater Andy Parker as the only surviving original members. The 1983 UFO was as captivating as ever and proved capable of delivering a highly enjoyable live show.

But back to the fax. Here we are in Leicester after one of the 'farewell' gigs where I've managed to persuade Mr Mogg to allow himself to be interviewed by a posse of fans in the dressing room. The last time I tried something along these lines was with Ritchie Blackmore a few years ago and it proved a little different from yer usual hack versus musician confrontation.

After signing a few autographs, Phil joins half a dozen young UFO supporters

and tells them: "What Gett's actually doing is making his job easier by asking you to ask me questions. He gets paid, but you're not actually getting a cut of his article!" (Cheers pal!)

Mogg is either smarter or more cynical than I'd conceived! Anyway, after this brief intro, the singer sits back and invites the fans to throw a few questions his way. I can't help grinning as the 'interview' starts with one young lad asking what ex-UFO guitarist Bernie Marsden's influences on the band were.

Mogg is a little taken aback but replies: "None – he was with us for about two or three months and that was about it. It was a period before we went to Germany, just before Michael Schenker joined. Basically, it was just a fill-in spot."

Next question...

What are your plans after UFO split up?

"I've got a paper round! No, I'm joining the queue – going on the dole... to be serious, I've got a few ideas, and I'm sure everybody else has too, but I'll just wait 'till it evolves."

Why did Pete Way leave?

"I don't think you can work at the pace we'd been working at – virtually nine months touring and three months recording – it's too hard, too harsh. If you do it for five years, you need a holiday. It's just too much and you get to the point where you've had enough. If it starts to become like a job or something that you don't wanna do, then you're obviously up for a change."

Is that why you're breaking up now?

"No, I think it's just that

IN THE BEGINNING: Way, Mogg, Parker and Schenker pursuing early half butch/half glam image. Just be thankful you can't see the shoes...



... **AND IN THE END:** 'Departures' is the word. The final UFO line-up featuring Andy Parker, Neil Carter, Paul Chapman, Phil Mogg, Paul Gray.



there's been enough personnel changes and the crunch never actually came until we started playing live after Pete left. It's one of those points where you're faced with going on a downhill path and no-one wants to do that."

Your music has changed a lot since 'Phenomenon' – do you agree?

"Yeah, we've learnt how to play!"

Did you used to play much in those days?

"Yeah, we were doing a six week tour of Germany and if you can find six weeks to play there then you must be doing all right – mind you, we did three of those on the Reeperbahn!"

What's that? (Quite a young fan, this one!)

"The striptease area... I was fooled too, I was dragged into it. They said come and look at this..."

Is that where you met up with Schenker?

"Yeah, he was dancing at a club one night!"

What sort of hobbies have you got?

"Anything you'd do, nothing specific... sex..."

Do you listen to much music?

"Yeah, anything current, anything that goes in the charts I'll listen to – basically I like to keep a check on what's going on."

We didn't like the support band (Socrates) – did you chose them?

"No, in fact I haven't seen them. You see, there's a certain point that the group reaches as far as business goes and you tend to limit yourself to what you're actually doing. You tend not to pay that much attention to the group that's on first, which can either be a good or a bad thing."

Who is your favourite guitarist?

"I haven't got one – I think they're few and far between, there's very few excellent guitarists around. The ones that are really good tend to get swamped up in something else which they don't play really well in, or you lose track of them. I mean Allan Holdsworth's a classic example. He's very talented... and I think Michael Schenker's really good. But on the whole I find they come and go."

Did you enjoy playing in Leicester tonight?

"Yeah, it was real good. There's certain places in England – Leicester, Bradford, Sheffield, Birmingham and all those towns – where there's a very high energy level. And that's why we don't do an awful lot of gigs in the South of England. It's also why we've recorded most of our live album in the Midlands, although we'll probably do one of the London shows."

When do you write songs?

"It all depends what kind of situation you're in. You either fall into the category of having to write an album and get it released by a certain time, or you start writing purely for the joy of it, which is obviously preferential. The more you tour, the more you do albums, the more it becomes like a 9 to 5 job where you have to write and maintain some kind of schedule for delivering on time."

Do you think synthesisers are killing music?

"Not really – in fact in this country music's always changing and I think it's quite valid to keep an open mind as to what's going on. If everyone turned around and said 'That's a load of rubbish' and immediately dismissed it, then you wouldn't have the wealth of groups that you've got here. It's kinda healthy."

Do you think about getting a commercial sound?

"Well, you can find a producer that'll make a commercial sound for you, but you usually end up having an argument with them after a while because they want to do so much. We've leant towards doing some commercial things or adhered to someone else's opinion of doing something commercial but it hasn't necessarily worked out. So we've tended to stick to what we're doing."

Do you take notice of what critics say?

"Not a lot – if you take too much notice of critics I don't think you'd carry on for very long. It can be very disheartening. You generally try to look at reviews from an objective point of view if you've got any sense and not let them get you down."

What do you think of the latest LP ('Making Contact')?

"I think it was one of the better ones we've done, especially as we did it with just the four of us. It just didn't sell! But we were still quite happy with what we recorded."

Who do you think is the best looking female in rock?

"That's pushing it... I haven't a clue!"

Pat Benatar?

"Nah, she's too small – you can't get suffocated with that!"

Do you get recognised in the street?

"Oh yeah, it's terrible... no, not at all really. The only time people recognised me was when I put some glasses on and they thought I was Nick Heyward!"

Gradually, the 'interview' came to an end and when the subject of money closed the curtains Phil told those in attendance: "If I explained the business side of everything to you, not only would it be very boring, but it would also be very depressing..."

Sad but true. UFO, RIP.



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ROCK U.S.A.

LAURA CANYON reporting

■ "I've never felt more happy in this business than I have with Pat", so **Glenn Hughes** reckoned to *Kerrang!* last time we spoke. "It's a very stable relationship." Except the horse has bolted, if reports that have reached *Mayhem's* ever open ears are true! Sources close to the band hint that **Pat Thrall** has gone back home to San Francisco in a huff, Hughes is in Hollywood with a writers' block, and they're saying it's "all over". Sounds a bit strange when only weeks ago the two pals were saying "This is at least a five year commitment of us" (Hughes) "So we're not breaking up!" (Thrall). We were unable to track down Glenn and Pat for their side of the story because of the Easter holidays, but their record company's product manager shrugged his shoulders and claimed as far as Epic knew, the two were still writing songs together and planning a long and happy future. More next ish.

■ Still, we bring you another marriage made in heaven. Guitarist **Rick Derringer** and drummer/author (of a book about wrecking hotels) and the

man who drew \$100 a week dole money while playing with the **Rod Stewart** band (we heard it from Rod's Own Lips!) **Carmine Appice**, they're working together on an album titled "Party Tasted."

■ Headbangers are going to get a lot of dust and dead mosquitos in their hair, but what the hey! The godawful outdoor money-raker the *Us Festival* is back again this May, redeeming itself somewhat by putting one of its four days aside for nothing but Heavy Metal. **David Lee Roth** and **Joe Walsh** turned up at a press conference decked out as a mini festival site to announce that the so-called "Music Event of the 80s" would be featuring a bill with **Van Halen**, **Scorpions**, **Triumph**, **Judas Priest**, **Ozzy Osbourne**, **Walsh** and local lads **Mötley Crüe**. **John Cougar**, **Quarterflash** and **Stevie Nicks** will be quarring in an appearance elsewhere in the event.

■ Two of **Styx's** biggest influences showed up to shake their hands and drool at their first *Pantages Theatre* "Kilroy Was Here" show. Wonder

who? A **Yes** or a **Zep** perchance? Nope: **Stephen Stills** and **Graham Nash**! According to **NWHM** (neo-wimp Heavy Metal) star **JY**: "Stills and Nash were quite a large influence on the members of this band a long time ago in our vocal stylings, and to have them come out and say that they really liked the show and were inspired by what they saw, it's the highest compliment we could have been paid." **Sting** of *Police* was there also, but was too busy catching the eye of all the little girls in the theatre to show up backstage.

■ The latest hot tour is by a band of travelling religious fundamentalists, who've been touring schools, colleges and churches in the States warning about those backwards-masked demonic messages in Heavy Metal records. They've put out a pamphlet claiming that in every HM record pressing plant in America where albums are made, there's an altar dedicated to **Satan**. Which for some reason reminds us that *Bitch* will be releasing a nice picture disc of their single "Leatherbound".

■ This weekend's Long Beach grand prix features a race to the death between *Midwestern Motor Maniacs* **Ted Nugent** and **J. Geils**, who have entered the celebrity section of the annual contest. The winner will walk off wit a whopping \$45,000 in prize money.

■ And **Ronnie Dio**, **Mick Fleetwood**, **Stevie Nicks** and **Christine McVie** turned up at a party to announce the first "Rock-n-Run" track event, which will be held here in May with a special rock concert following. **Dio** didn't say if he'd been running, but he is rushing his debut album with new group "Dio" out by the end of April. From what we've heard, the man's in fine voice on it, and any tales that he's wimped out are completely round the twist.

■ Keeps them off the streets while their old men are touring: **Keith Richard's** girlfriend, model **Patti Hansen**, has landed a part opposite teen-throb **Rickspringfield** in a film called "Hard To Hold", being shot this summer. Same time, different film, has **Mick Jagger's** sidekick **Jerri Hall** with a role in the film "Even Cowgirls Get The Blues".

■ **Molly Hatchet** are getting some stick from anti-gun groups in America with their new album. "No Guts... No Glory" - the one featuring the return of prodigal vocalist **Danny Joe Brown** - features a tribute to the slain **John Lennon** ("Fall of the Peacemakers") but has enough guns and ammo on the cover to fight a war in Asia and have plenty left over for America's resident maniacs.

JK's heavy crusade!

CONSIDERING THE popularity of heavy rock in this country, it's amazing how little exposure it actually gets on British radio and television. There's a definite need for coverage of this type of music and, as far as I'm concerned, it's long overdue.

One man who's finally attempting to resolve the situation is **Jonathan King**, host of the BBC's new Friday night TV show 'Entertainment USA', and when he was recently in London he gave me the basic outline of the programme.

"It's going to be in a different city in America each week," explained King, "looking at the current US charts and music scene and it will also involve concerts and interviews. There is very little of the certain kind of music that *Kerrang!* caters for on British TV at the moment, and those are exactly the sort of acts we'll be featuring fairly heavily on 'Entertainment USA' - **AC/DC**, **Van Halen**, **Judas Priest**, **Iron Maiden**, **Billy Squier**, **Kiss** and **Rush** - simply because they happen to be the groups that teenagers in America like.

"We'll also be featuring the likes of **Tom Petty** and **Bob Seger**, the not-quite-so-heavy artistes, who never get any exposure in Britain."

How did the idea of 'Entertainment USA' evolve?

"Well, I originally started by going to 'Top Of The Pops' and saying 'Why don't I have a look at the American charts when I'm over there?'. My reason for that was because I'd felt for a long time that it was a shame so many good American hits never took off in Britain.

"Eighteen months ago, before I started my 'TOTP' spot, the two charts were completely separate, but once I started the segment it worked terribly well and two or three of the records I featured everytime would turn out to be huge hits. so the logical extension was to turn it into a half-hour programme."

Do you agree that heavy rock lacks exposure in Britain?

"Most definitely, yes - in fact I hate the state of radio in Britain. One of the things I'm doing in the very first 'Entertainment USA' show is giving people a taste of American radio and then having a huge on-camera moan at the Government, saying why on earth can't we have the same thing in this country.

"We need specialist commercial radio in the big cities on VHF and there's no reason why we can't have it like they do in America. On the rock front, there are three or four major stations in New York, all of them chasing the same market and the ones that do it best are the ones that win. There are problems because they tend to get a bit bland and cater for the sponsors, but I think it would be a great step in the right direction if we could have that kind of competition here.

"It's a poor state of affairs for British rock fans. You've got one show on



JONATHAN KING: "Where else can you see a feature on **Ozzy Osbourne**?"

Radio One buried away late at night and that's the end of it. There's constant promotion for synthesiser music, pop and middle-of-the-road stuff all day long, plus there's the punky, new wave bands on *John Peel's* show every evening - but there's practically nothing for rock fans.

"AC/DC is one of my very favourite bands and I would love to hear them on the radio. In a show I did for *Capital* on New Years Day I managed to play **Van Halen**, **Sheena Easton**, **AC/DC** and **Jennifer Holliday** one after another and there's no reason why you can't do that."

I guess it's tough in Britain because the music is so fashion-orientated? "Yeah, in Britain things can happen so fast and also at the moment the music is very much synthesiser based... and I don't like that. I much prefer guitars and I think guitars are going to come back in 1983. My prediction is that it's going to become the year of the guitar.

"The reason I like guitars is because you can get a whole range of different sounds. You can get a poignant sound like at the end of *Layla* or a huge whammy *Rainbow*-type special multi-chorded *Deep Purple* meets *Led Zeppelin* sound."

Jonathan King is adamant that 'Entertainment USA' will give an enormous boost to the rock scene and one can only wish him luck with the venture. Mind you, let's hope that it paves the way for others to follow and that we can look forward to other outlets for HM on both radio and the box in the future.

"The reason I feel 'Entertainment USA' will appeal to your readers is because HM simply doesn't get exposure in Britain" reckons King. "Where else will one see a feature on **Ozzy Osbourne**? Here, it'll fit perfectly..."

STEVE GETT

REVENGE OF THE

TOTO guitarist STEVE LUKATHER gets the last laugh. Interview by LAURA CANYON.

SOMEWHERE IN the San Fernando Valley, six nice normal guys are sitting around in a studio. In the middle is a black vinyl voodoo doll about the size of a 45. It's singing a dreamy, catchy little tune: "I bless the rain down in A...frica" ... The nice normal guys are taking it in turns to stick pins into it. This one's marked 'critics'; that one's marked 'listeners'; this one's marked 'Grammy Awards'.

For decades to come, 1983 will be remembered, by the people who remember these things, as the year Toto got their own back. For years they've made sophisticated records and the press dismisses them as aural jellybeans. For years they've toured and tried to establish an identity and the critics call them faceless, meaningless all-things-to-all-men musicians, citing their name even (in Japan, a toilet bowl; in France, head lice; in America, a movie star dog) as evidence. And when they did once get nominated for a Grammy award they were beaten – which wouldn't have been so bad if it wasn't by the pathetic 'Boogie Oogie Oogie'. Added to which, their third album, 'Turn Back', sold about three copies in America and practically everywhere else except Japan.

Then out comes 'Toto IV'. First one single jumps into the charts, then a second, then a third. In America, Japan, even Europe for the first time. 'Africa's' beaming down from the top of the British charts. And the Grammy people shove all the new music aside to make way for nine nominations for Toto. They walk away with five. Hmm, say a lot of the critics; maybe they're not so bad after all. This voodoo is strong stuff!

Revenge is sweet. But Steve Lukather, Toto's guitarist – the other's are Jeff, Steve and Mike Porcaro, David Paich and Bobby Kimball – couldn't be sweeter. Here I am, up at his lovely Hollywood Hills home with the Porsche in the driveway and grand piano in the living room, and instead of gloating he's offering coffee. Even his dog licks critics' hands. Steve seems just as surprised as the rest of us at the way things have gone.

"Everything's happening so fast! But I've grafted, man. It's just like everything else – you have to work to stay on top of things, make sure you write good

songs and really work at your instruments and become a better musician, just to keep things going. Because I don't believe in that 'flash in the pan' crap. Longevity is the key thing."

Toto's been going since 1979, but before that time most of the members had made names for themselves as studio session players – Pink Floyd, Elton John, Cheap Trick, Barbra Streisand, Paul McCartney, Alice Cooper, to name just a few million dollars worth. Which is why it's sometimes surprising to remember how young they are. Steve Lukather's still in his mid-20s. Young enough to be in a new wave band!

"I'm their Antichrist! Everything that they hate. But we're all doing the same thing – playing music. Our music sounds good to me. I like all kinds of music: I like rock, I like new wave, but I guarantee they won't say the same thing about me. I've been playing 18 years and I've been through that hip stage – 'ooh, I won't listen to that stuff' – but that's stupid man. Music's music."

As for being called commercial, bland pop-rock by the critics:

"They put us in a bag. They don't like us because we've played on other people's records. They think we've got some formula for success from working with other people, which is nonsense. A lot of people don't like us, but a lot of people do, and there's always going to be that. We can't worry about the people who don't like us because they're not going to like us anyway. All we have to do is stay true to our music. Who am I to say we're better than so and so? Who cares if I play guitar better than somebody? I do what I'm doing and nobody does what I do. Nobody does what you do. Some people don't understand our band, what we're trying to do. They think we're trying to do it for the money or something, which isn't the case at all. We wouldn't have to be in a band to make money."

If you must know, Toto was doing just the opposite. By the time 'IV' came out, the band was a quarter of a million dollars in debt.

"At least! Touring costs you an awful lot of money, especially the way we do it. We spare no expense to make it as good as we possibly can. We saw a breakdown sheet of what it cost us as opposed to what we made and it was just frightening. But you have to do it. You go out and

tour in order to sell records."

Unfortunately, with album number three that didn't quite work out. Weren't they discouraged by the lack of sales when they went in to make 'Toto IV'?

"That album was the real dog as far as sales went! But it was a fun album to do. We did it very fast after a tour and, I guess, looking back on it – though hindsight is real easy – we simply wanted to make a rock and roll record because we'd just come off the road, and we rushed ourselves, that's all. For what it is, though, I think it's a real good record. It was something that was necessary for us to do in order to make our fourth album, I think, because we had to sit down and really evaluate what we wanted to do."

Did they get together then and say: 'okay, let's write a hit or three this time'?

"No. We never say: 'hey, we're going to make a record like this'. We said: 'wait a second, let's go with what works instead of trying to do something we're not. Let's just be us'. That's what we did and – knock on wood – it worked out for us. We would still have been hanging in there though if it hadn't, I think."

So no-one said: 'forget it; let's just do session work where we make a lot of money and at least earn some respect'?

"No. It's really rewarding when you get to work with some of the people we've had a chance to work with, but it's not really satisfying in the sense that ultimately it's not your own music, you're working for somebody else, you know what I mean? Most of the time they let you do what you want to do, but with Toto you have final control over the product and the songs and the material and you don't have that as a session player."

Steve's first jobs, like those of his colleagues, were as a studio sideman. When bands found out he could read music and play what they wanted, the teenager would get 10-20 quid to play on their demo sessions, something he's continued to do on a grander scale throughout the life of the band.

Do all session men deep down want to be rockstars?

"No, not all. Me, I'd much rather be on the road than in the studio. I've always wanted to be successful and play live. I didn't even know what a session was until I was 17 years old, and I've been playing since I was seven."



Picture by Chris Walter

(EX) SESSION MEN



Pic T.J. Brown

So there were a lot of garage bands in between the time I was 7 and 17. I had bands that sounded like AC/DC over 10 years ago! Power trios. They had silly names. We used to make up hideous names. I was once in a band called Phlegm! You're kids, you know, you want to repulse people. We just used to play at dances and parties and those sorts of things, no real bigtime stuff. Just like anyone else."

Would he rather the band was less slick, more hard rock?

"Yeah I love to turn up the guitar more," he laughs. "But I like all music, man. That's the thing. That's what keeps it stimulating for me – there's always something new and challenging. I can go from some quiet thing to having the Marshalls on 10 or some Keith Richards type thing – I think he's one of the greatest rhythm guitar players there ever was. I appreciate looseness too. I'm not just this professional who likes everything real tight. Looseness keeps it real."

Can he have that within Toto?

"Yeah. We don't all sit there and read our music or our parts or anything. You never see a chart in the studio ever with us. We create on the spot; we don't work things out that much. As far as rhythm and vocal arrangements go, none of that stuff is written out ever. Never has been, never will be. You don't get any better by playing it safe."

Does Toto play live enough for his tastes?

"I love to play live, there's no doubt about that. But I also love the creative process in the studio. Right now I'm producing a record with Keith Olsen (of Sammy Hagar fame), co-producing Tom Kelly and Billy Steinberg, two songwriters – they wrote 'Fire and Ice' for Benatar and 'How Do I Make You' for Ronstadt – and this is their first American production."

"I'm learning a lot from Keith. And learning from somebody else has brought a lot of new ideas into the band. And that's the positive thing about all of us working with other people. Like Jeff and David are going to produce Boz Scaggs' new record, while Steve and David are going to produce a couple of things for the Jacksons – we're spreading ourselves out a little bit, but we're doing different things. These creative experiences really help the band, I think. Not that we steal ideas from anybody, but the more you do the better you get. It's like sex. The more you do it the better you get at it!"

But, like sex, do too much and you wear yourself out. Do they stretch themselves so far that there's no energy left for the band?

"That's true, you can do too much, and I've explored the limits of that. Sex and music both feel good but you've got to cool it every once in a while! A couple of times we've spread ourselves a

little thin, and that's really kind of a drag. But once you go through that and realise that, then you don't do it anymore. Which is what's happening now. I'm not really doing that many sessions these days unless it's for a close friend. Not because I don't want to play on other people's records anymore, but because I'm wearing myself out and I need to have a little time at home with my old lady (the former Marie Currie, twin sister of ex-Runaway Cherie Currie) who I don't get enough time to see anyway. That's a drag, because I enjoy being at home with my wife and dogs. I'm not necessarily out in Hollywood partying every night!

"You can't do it all. And we've done so much collectively and individually for other people and stuff that we feel like now we've gotten some success we don't have to do it to pay the rent. Not to say that's the reason we did it, but it certainly helped pay the bills."

It's strange to think that some picture Toto as people you can spot waxing the Rolls in between thinking up commercial singles.

"I don't have a Rolls. I have a Porsche! But you work for those things, man. You really work your ass off. I mean, I don't live in Bel Air or nothing like that. I have a nice comfortable home, I've got no complaints, believe me, but they're not just given to you and they can be taken away from you real fast if you don't work at what you're doing. None of us are millionaires, though we make a comfortable living – because we do a lot of things and spread ourselves out. Toto is just starting to make some money now, and we've been doing it for five years."

"We've had ups and downs just like every other band. You have to fail once in a while. It shows you you have to take on a new challenge."

Talking about a challenge, there's word that some of the stuff on the upcoming album – already well under way – is rawer and raunchier than 'the Stones or Rod Stewart'. True?

"Yeah, we have some stuff in the can that you wouldn't really recognise as Toto. And we've got some new stuff that's relatively like that."

Nothing odd about that, Steve reckons. If you're talking odd, what about 'Africa'?

"It almost didn't get on the album. It was such a bitch to mix, because there were so many sounds, different little percussion sounds and stuff like that, very subtle things we insisted on, right? It was such a hassle. And who would have thought it'd do anything? You don't know what the hit single is going to be when you're making a record, you really don't."

"We thought 'Rosanna' had a shot, and that did real well, but 'Africa' ... I thought: 'shit, if this one ends up on the radio ...'. It doesn't mean anything! The lyrics are so out there. What does this mean, David? (Paich wrote the thing). The lyrics are just weird. It's not 'ooh, baby I love you', something everybody can grasp and go: 'oh yeah, I can dig that!' 'I bless the rain down in Africa!' The cosmic monk, we call him!"

Every member of Toto knows how to write a tune or two. Witness Steve, who got the Grammy for co-writing a song outside of the band. ("First off, I didn't think in a million years we would have won for best r&b song of the year, not up against Marvin Gaye and Stevie Wonder. Come on, three white boys from the Valley, let's be serious, r&b song of the year?! I don't think it was as good a song as 'Sexual Healing' or something like that!") When they go in to record an album, how do they keep the egos in check? How come they don't end up making six solo albums?

"We don't have an ego problem because we really don't have to prove anything to each other. We all know what we can do. We're all the same really."

"We could have six solo albums in theory, but why? Everybody intends on doing a solo project some time in the future – probably not in the near future – but it's not going to be like the Kiss solo albums: that's bullshit! You can't flood the market or people go *yeuk*, next!"

"If ever we died in a plane crash, they could make Toto albums for a couple of years to come. Seriously. We overcut by at least five songs every album. Everybody gets a chance to cut their songs, so everybody gets a chance to put out. The best songs go on and that's the way it works."

It's worked pretty well so far. The only defection from the Toto ranks has been bassist David Hundgate, quickly replaced by yet another Porcaro in their attempt to turn the band into an Italian version of the Partridge Family. Which brings us to the conclusion. Toto will be digging up the old roots to visit Europe before the end of the year. Steve and Jeff Porcaro will be popping in beforehand to help out Paul McCartney on a new film.

Steve Lukather (TOTO)

